MAPPING NEW DIRECTIONS IN
LATINO RESEARCH

INTER-UNIVERSITY PROGRAM FOR LATINO RESEARCH
Mapping New Directions in Latino Research

Inter-University Program for Latino Research
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ABSTRACT

This document presents a map of what we know about Latinos and what we need to know. Six issue areas are covered: families and youth, civic and political engagement, global economy, higher education, language, and visual arts and artists. Our goal is to provide guidelines to funders of research on new directions to consider as well as on specific areas that need to be investigated. These new approaches will deepen our understanding of the situation of Latinos in the United States and may lead to better conceived and targeted programs to serve these communities. This project was led by the Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR), a consortium of twenty-five Latino research centers based in major universities across the United States, in consultation with key policy experts (Appendix 1). Since 1982, IUPLR has led research projects that have contributed to changing the research paradigms through which Latinos are studied.

THE CONTEXT AND THE PROJECT

The number of Latinos in the United States continues to grow. In 1900, there were only slightly more than 500,000 Latinos. Today, the national Latino population numbers more than 58 million and represents the largest and most diverse racial/ethnic groups in the United States. One in every six Americans, or 17.5% of the population, is Latino. By the year 2035, “Latinos could account for one of every five residents, one of every four by 2055, and one of every three by 2100.”

This includes long-established communities as well as recent arrivals. Differences along nationalities, socioeconomic, gender, regions, generations, and religion, to name a few, create a
A richly diverse population. How we understand and consequently act upon issues facing Latinos will affect the foundation of U.S. society and its place in the hemisphere.

There has been a proliferation of Latino studies programs throughout the country. The few single ethnic programs, such as Chicano and Puerto Rican studies, that emerged in the late 1960s have been supplemented by a growing number of graduate and undergraduate degrees and research-oriented Latino studies programs. The U.S.-centric paradigm that originally framed Latino studies has been broadened to include a transnational perspective. Emerging studies focusing on Afro-Latinos and on Latinos now living in areas where there had been no previous Latino communities are contributing to the growth of the field. The impact that natural disasters and climate change have on the displacement of Latino communities and their economies are incipient areas of inquiry. Today, several institutionalized annual academic conferences focus on Latinos, and several academic journals publish peer-reviewed Latino-oriented studies.

Yet despite this growth, scholarship about Latinos and funding for programs aimed at their communities have not kept pace. Between 2011 and 2015, less than 2% of the dissertations approved had Latinos as a topic of study. Not surprisingly, philanthropic dollars going to Latino programs have also been minimal. In 2011, the Foundation Center found that only 1.30% of philanthropic dollars had gone to Latino programs and research. A follow-up study indicated that this trend had not changed. And federal spending on Latinos by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the National Science Foundation (NSF) hover at about 3.42%, 1.61%, and 0.67% respectively. The limited research that is funded is oftentimes guided by dated paradigms and trapped in rigid disciplinary boundaries.

Latinos have either been studied in models designed to explore white ethnic migration or the African American experience. In studies that focus on the immigrant experience, the conceptual paradigms are mainly informed by perspectives that have the nation-state as the organizer of people’s economies, politics, and identities. These perspectives recognize the movement of people from one part of the world to another, yet they are mainly based on concepts developed to understand immigrants in their new countries. This linear model of adaption in new homelands assumes that people leave behind many of their cultural practices and language, and predicts cultural, linguistic, and political incorporation within a generation. Frameworks such as assimilation and even acculturation are based on premises that may no longer hold, given the group inequalities that make incorporation difficult and far removed from a unidirectional upward mobility. We know that borders are more porous to the flow of capital, goods, and ideas. Transportation has allowed for more rapid movement of people, even as borders have simultaneously become less permeable to them. Those who leave are still engaged in multiple ways with the places they left, which inform them as they continue to be informed by them.

Latinos have also been viewed through the lens of U.S. racial experiences, and while this lens may indeed grasp part of Latino life, it also misses important elements of Latino reality, particularly in the present moment of globalization. For instance, several years ago, a call for proposals from the federal government to create a Hispanic Research Center asked about the impact of the missing father on Latino communities. Instead, considering that 67% of Latino children lived with two parents, and that 48% of Latino households were composed of married couples in 2016, this call could have asked about what happens when both parents work in low-income-generating jobs, or for that matter, what happens to families when a parent is deported.
Furthermore, Latino-oriented research tends to either ignore cultural factors or overemphasize them. As we were preparing this report, a program officer at a major foundation suggested that if we presented a proposal without the word “Latino” in the title, they could consider it: They had decided not to fund proposals with explicit reference to ethnic or racial groups. In contrast, vast amount of research continues to point to Latino conservative cultural values as a major influencer of Latino behavior, whether it is family structure, reproductive and sexual well-being, or civic engagement. These conceptual paradigms, therefore, either render Latinos invisible or suggest cultural determinism in behavioral and social patterns. In either case, they do not get to the complexities of Latinos, particularly in the context of globalization.

One of the consequences of ill-fitting paradigms is that contemporary debates—and consequently, policies—that emerge about who properly belongs to the citizenry, what kinds of communities are desirable, who is entitled to jobs and benefits, how to address cultural and linguistic diversity in public schools, the nature of hybrid cultural productions, etc., are particularly contentious and non-productive, in part because they are anchored in inadequate conceptual frameworks that do not get to the underlying causes in this global reality.

When we started this project two years ago, we decided to focus on issue areas in which our centers had substantial expertise. It is at these crossroads that it becomes more urgent to develop a new infrastructure for the analysis and mapping of research directions and projects about Latinos. There are other obvious areas not included here, such as health and K-12 education, because we decided to focus on areas that showcase our research strengths and capabilities. In addition, we have not included a separate area for immigration, race, or gender, since these issues are constantly present in most debates.

Directors of centers with expertise in the issue areas oversaw the initial work, which included extensive review of the literature. This initial step was supplemented by a series of consultations with policy experts as well as by broader discussions at workshops held at the IUPLR Siglo XXI conference in 2017. The major findings in the literature have been synthesized here. There is a general reference list at the end of the document. The list is not meant to be exhaustive but rather to give examples of trends in the field. The complete report distills the main points from these two phases of the project.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITY PROJECTS**

In this section, we discuss new directions for research on Latinos. We first include recommendations for general directions for all research, and then we offer summaries of current literature, briefly presenting what we know with recommendations for each specific issue area. In each category, multiple studies were consulted, and what we present are main trends in each field. A selected bibliography is added at the end of the document.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH TOPICS**

- Diversity within: Research about Latinos needs to take into consideration racial, gender, regional, national, and generational diversity in Latino communities.
• Mixed status families: Except for Puerto Ricans, who are U.S. citizens, the increase in mixed-status families presents challenges in understanding Latino communities.

• Better databases: In all issue areas, there is a need to update and expand basic data sets.

• Transnationalism: While there are multiple generations of Latino immigrants and communities that are older than the United States itself, the impact of globalization on Latino communities demands a transnational and historical lens to be brought to the study of Latinos in general. This would also include comparative studies on U.S. Latinos and Latin Americans at home.

• Youth: The relative youthfulness of the Latino community should be kept in mind when formulating research projects about Latinos. Intergenerational studies would be particularly valuable.

• Asset-based perspectives: There is a strong tendency to document Latinos from a deficit perspective, which obfuscates their assets. As such, research projects should also encourage comprehensive examinations of assets.

• Interdisciplinary approaches: Most issues would benefit from collaborative cross-disciplinary work that can set up new intellectual scaffolds to construct more comprehensive conceptualizations of Latinos.
FAMILIES, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH

Despite the size of the Latino population, not much is known about the changes to the Latino family structure after immigration to the United States or among later generations. Young people make up by far the largest and fastest-growing subgroup of the Latino community nationwide. Between 1980 and 2011, there was a 495% increase in the number of Latino students at the national level. The majority of them (roughly 71%) come from immigrant, Spanish-speaking households. The majority of Latino youth (over 90% since 2013) are U.S.-born, but still over half have at least one immigrant parent. Immigration is a transformative event for the Latino family, as it is for individuals themselves. Research must acknowledge the impact of immigration on family integration and child development, but also expand the research focus to acknowledge the growing number of citizen-born Latino children and their experiences.

Latino family within the society

What we know

- U.S. births have been the major factor for Latino population growth since 2000. Since 2013, over 90% of Latino children have been U.S.-born, over 50% of them with at least one parent who was not born in the United States.

- The immigration status of undocumented parents and mixed-status families may place children and subsequent generations in precarious situations because of the legal barriers these families face.

- Some studies indicate that U.S.-born Latinos and subsequent generations are subject to more negative aspects of integration than Latinos who emigrated to the United States. That includes, but is not limited to, higher reporting of discrimination, working-class and educational stagnation, and greater chance of criminal conviction. Researchers continue to credit these differences to ‘immigrant optimism’—where immigrants feel motivated and optimistic about their opportunities in the United States, whereas later, U.S.-born generations may be more attuned to the marginal status of Latinos.
• Roughly 50% of U.S. gang members are Latino. A study on Latino adolescents in Atlanta, Georgia, published in 2013, suggested that U.S.-born Latinos experiencing discrimination were more likely to be involved in gangs, but gang involvement of U.S.-born Latinos was only slightly higher than that of foreign-born Latinos.\textsuperscript{12}

\textit{Future research directions}

• More research on the integration experiences of the second and later generations, considering that the U.S.-born population is making up a significant portion of Latino growth.

• More longitudinal research to critically assess the stagnation of Latinos among second and later generations, especially where cross-sectional research methods may not adequately capture the diversity of individual experiences.

• More research on the strategies of incorporation and integration of deportees in their country of origin.

• More research on the impact of gang violence on children and youth in the Latino community.

• More research on the involvement of young Latinas in gangs, as they are largely absent from the research, yet some studies suggest that young women are just as likely to be involved in gangs as their male counterparts.

\textit{Changes within the internal Latino family dynamic}

\textit{What we know}

• Children tend to adapt more quickly to the United States than their adult family members. Research suggests this unevenness may lead to higher stress within the family and to changes to the family dynamic, such as when children act as primary interpreters for the family.\textsuperscript{13} Statewide research in Oregon published in 2011 revealed that the different rates of adaptation between children and their families may be linked to negative overall integration over time.\textsuperscript{14}

• Research suggests an increase in the prevalence of single-parent households among second- and later-generation Latinos, with evidence that the traditionally strong family centrality weakens through longer exposure in the United States.\textsuperscript{15} Research from a national survey published in 2017 suggests that, in particular, Latinas not born in the United States were more likely to live in two-parent households than their U.S.-born peers, Latinas or not.\textsuperscript{16}

• A review of nationwide data published in 2013 revealed that one in four deportations involved the family of a child who is a U.S. citizen; however, these figures did not include undocumented children.\textsuperscript{17}
According to research from 2009 in Texas, which has the largest subgroup of undocumented children on welfare outside of California, undocumented children are less likely to be placed with kin when their parent(s) and/or guardians are detained or deported than are their documented Latino peers.18

**Future research directions**

- More research on the mechanisms of incorporation within and between Latino families into U.S. society. One possible avenue is a more nuanced look at the various ways adults and their children adapt to U.S. society, and the impact of this adaptation on the family dynamic and overall integration.

- New research would benefit from asking questions on how immigration, incorporation, and labor availability impact the family dynamic and the integration of family members.

- More research to better understand the diversity in family dynamics and living arrangements among various racial and ethnic groups in the United States, with comparisons between U.S.-born families and families not born in the United States.

- More research on the societal factors that impede family integration along different scales (i.e., national, regional, local) and their impact at the family and individual levels.

- More research on the consequences to the immediate family and the well-being of the children when, during deportation and detainment, the rights of undocumented parents are terminated.

- More research on the impact of circular migrations, detainment, and deportations on the dynamics of the immediate family, as well as on that of informal and extended family units. For example, what happens when children left behind are sent to live with extended family members?

- More research on the employment patterns of Latinos and their impact on the family, such as how many families have two working parents and how the type of work they do, their work schedule, and work hours affect the family dynamic.

**Latino family well-being**

*What we know*

- Latinos make up the largest portion of teen births in the United States, although their rates have declined more than any other ethnic group (by 50%) since the 1990s.19

- Young Latinas are less likely to use contraceptives than their non-Latina white peers, even though their sexual intercourse rates are similar.20 In 2010, Latino youth had over three times the HIV rates of non-Latino white youth.21 Research suggests that minorities are less likely to have access to reproductive health care than whites.22
• Several studies have found that healthy monitoring by parents and guardians and productive parent/child communications are linked to positive adolescent sexual practices and activities and may act as a buffer for later sexual violence.  

• Research published in 2014 indicated that, among Latinas (in this case, the majority of Mexican origin), those who immigrated to the United States may have more access to sex education and greater reproductive agency.

• After the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, the uninsured rates among Latino adults (whose uninsured rate is much larger than that of any other ethnic group) has seen a near 20-point decline. Despite this, Latinos are still less likely to be insured than non-Latinos, with generational differences among the Latino population.

• Latinos who immigrated to the United States were the least likely to have full year-round coverage, with roughly half not being insured and only about one-third insured year-round. The rates for later-generation Latinos are rising slowly. Those enrolled in aid programs such as WIC (Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants, and Children) and the Food Stamp Program are more likely to be insured.

Future research directions

• More research on the factors that may be affecting the significant decrease in Latino teen births since the 1990s.

• More research to assess the best practices for making health care more accessible to the Latino community (i.e., linguistically, culturally, etc.).

• More research to understand how Latino well-being differs from that of other immigrant and minority groups.

• More research employing both longitudinal and qualitative methods to assess the impact that detention and deportation have on the well-being and development of family and young people.
CIVIC AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

The research continues to demonstrate that Latinos are actively invested in U.S. society and engage at local, regional, national, and transnational levels. Naturalization has been used as a marker of immigrant political integration, and the research suggests that well over 90% of non-naturalized Latinos want to naturalize, but various barriers (e.g., language, application process, etc.) may impede them. Meanwhile, the majority of Latino youth (over 90% since 2013) are U.S.-born, making the majority of young Latinos citizens by birthright. Of the roughly 27.3 million eligible Latino voters in 2016, millennials made up a significant portion of the electorate population (roughly 44%). While some work has been done on Latino civic engagement, we are just beginning to parse through the diversity of this dynamic community.

**Latino Millenials Made Up Significant Portion of the Latino Electorate Population**

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<th></th>
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<th>Boomer</th>
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<td>White</td>
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**Latino civic and political engagement**

*What we know*

- Researchers have found that U.S. born Latinos are not significantly more likely to engage in non-electoral political activities than Latino immigrants, while U.S.-born Latinos may be more likely to engage in unconventional politics (e.g., protests).

- Research indicates that social networks and other contextual factors (i.e., documentation status, transnational engagement, social capital, inclusiveness of society, age, local context, etc.) may be better predictors of Latino civic and political engagement than socioeconomic status alone.

*Future research directions*

- More qualitative and local research with a comparative lens to understand how the local and regional context may shape Latino civic engagement.
More research to explore how and when policy issues drive Latino mobilization and civic engagement.

More research on the impact of discrimination and neighborhood segregation on the Latino community and its civic engagement.31

Research suggests that Latinos, as a group, perceive themselves to be targets of dehumanization, most recently during the 2016 Republican primaries.32 More research is needed to explore how perceptions of dehumanization may impact civic engagement and voter turnout.

More research on how Latinos may be encouraged, or discouraged, to integrate politically by their non-Latino social networks at the local and regional levels.

**Latino politics**

*What we know*

- Research suggests that well over 90% of non-naturalized Latinos want to naturalize, but various barriers (e.g., language, application process, etc.) may impede them.33

- In 2015, lawful Mexican immigrants were less likely than all other immigrant groups (42% versus 62%) to actually obtain naturalization.34

- Research suggests that dual nationality does not negatively impact U.S. political engagement, but may actually promote greater U.S. political connectedness.35 For example, since the 1990s, there has been a 10-point percentage increase in naturalizations among Latin American immigrants.36

- Latinas, compared to women across other ethnic groups, are more likely to hold elected positions and even more likely to be elected over their male counterparts in certain communities and contexts.37

- Latinas who have spent a greater percentage of their life in the United States are more likely than Latino males to identify with a political ideology or party; gender gaps may vary by national origin, generation, and age.38

- A study published in 2017 on U.S.-born Latinos of Mexican origin indicates that stronger Mexican cultural identity is linked to more liberal political ideologies, but Anglo-American identity among Mexican Americans is not linked to any particular political ideology.39

- Research suggests voter turnout is slightly higher among Latinos who immigrated to the United States, with a slight decrease for each subsequent generation.40

- Approximately 47.6% of eligible Latinos voted in the 2016 presidential elections; however, this means that only about 12.7 million Latinos voted, while about 14 million
eligible Latino voters did not. Overall, approximately 56% of eligible voters cast their ballots in the 2016 presidential elections.

Future research directions

- More research on the multiple factors that influence naturalization rates among Latinos.
- More research to understand how Latino panethnic, interethnic, transnational, and immigrant perspectives intersect within a Latino political experience, and in what ways these perspectives may increase political engagement and beliefs.
- More research to understand the factors (e.g., generation, age, country of origin, etc.) that impact transnational political participation, and the ways in which they interact with U.S. civic and political engagement of immigrants and their later generations.
- More research to understand why Latinos may vote for coethnics under some circumstances and not under others.
- More research to explore what issues and political events contribute to a Latino coalition, and how they may intersect with diverse positions (e.g., documentation status, generation, age, location, etc.).

Youth and civic engagement

What we know

- Of the roughly 27.3 million eligible Latino voters in 2016, millennials made up a significant portion of the electorate population (roughly 44%).
- In contrast to the popular image of youth as apolitical, some research suggests that young people are active participants in civic and political activities. Education, representation in popular culture, and immigration issues appear to be important topics in which youth engage civically.
- Research suggests that ethno-racial identity is an important aspect of Latino youth’s civic and political engagement and sense of national belonging in the United States.
- Research indicates that U.S.-born Latinos (birthright citizens) may still feel excluded from the national body politic as an ethno-racial “other.”
- Research conducted on high school seniors found that increased perceptions of discrimination did not increase civic beliefs but did increase civic activism.
- Research has found that Latino youth primarily use their phone to stay connected to the internet. Additionally, their access to social media and virtual news outlets provides “unofficial citizenship training,” where they are informed by, and participate in, political issues and debates.
A review of U.S. civic and politically inclined websites suggests that the majority of young Latinos do not take advantage of the participation potential. Instead, the review found most websites framed youth as “citizens-in-training” instead of “actualizing citizens.”  

Future research directions

- More research on how young people develop political and civic skills and how these intersect with local contexts, ethno-racial identities, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), documentation status, etc.

- Although civic and political beliefs are continually (re)created throughout one’s life, more research, both qualitative and longitudinal, is needed on what factors motivate civic and political beliefs in early adolescence and their implications in later activism and political engagement.

- More research on the role of social media in the formation of civic beliefs and on how social media facilitates and helps shape civic and political engagement.
LATINOS IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

The growing U.S. Latino population is multicultural, has strong networks, high rates of business ownership, and in some cases, double citizenship. Concurrently, Latinos are operating within a changing economy with reduced employment security, benefits, and quality full-time jobs. It is a critical time to focus research on the implications of a growing Latino population within a changing U.S. economy. Between the years 2009 and 2013, Latinos accounted for 43.4% of total jobs growth, with U.S.-born Latinos driving most of that growth. And the group’s purchasing power is on the rise. In 2014, the purchasing power of Latinos was $1.3 trillion, a gain of 155% since 2000. A reexamination of Latinos in the global economy is needed that considers the effects of accelerated globalization on the Latino labor force, particularly on young people.

Entrepreneurship and financial behaviors

What we know

- In 2015, the GDP produced by all Latinos in the United States was $2.13 trillion, out of $18.04 trillion total GDP.

- The growth rate of Latino businesses in the United States has outpaced the growth rate of businesses owned by any other group, even though Latino businesses have the lowest rate of loans from financial institutions.

- There is a growth in self-employment among Latinos, especially those not born in the United States. Successful Latino immigrant entrepreneurs are more likely to be millennials who came to the United States as children.

- The 2012 U.S. Small Business Administration survey counted 3.3 million Latino-owned business, a 46% growth from 2007.

- Latino owned businesses are global-minded; among employer firms (firms with paid employees), Latino firms have the highest rate of business clients and customers outside the United States.
• Latina entrepreneurs represent nearly half of all Latino-owned firms, yet they face a funding ceiling compared to their male counterparts.58

• In 2016, Latinos contributed $74.3 billion in remittances to their countries of origin despite the recession. Post-recession remittance patterns to Latin American countries are stabilizing and increasing.59

• The Latino communities’ underutilization of wealth-enhancing financial instruments is related to two primary factors: income constraints tied to educational outcomes, and lack of knowledge and understanding of financial markets and products.60

Future research directions

• More research on pipelines of Latino business formation and sustainability, owner demographics, expansion to international markets, and what business-formation programs work best.61

• More research on how to most effectively engage Latino communities in understanding and using financial services and instruments.

• Research on the long-term effects of natural disasters and population displacement, specifically on home countries and new destinations using a transnational perspective.

• Research on the impact on Latino communities of the globalization of cities and on political representation resulting from new settlement patterns.

Latinos in the workforce

What we know

• 15% of all U.S. adults in both the GIG economy (where organizations employ independent workers on limited-time engagements) and online sales are Latino. They are 21% of GIG workers and 13% of online sellers.

• One in seven women in the U.S. workforce is a Latina. The share of Latinas in the labor force has nearly doubled over the last 20 years. By 2014, Latinas were projected to account for 18.1% of the female labor force and 8.5% of the total labor force in the United States.62

• Of the estimated 2.5 million farmworkers in the United States, 48% lack work authorization, and 73% were not born in the United States, the majority of Mexican descent.63

• Latinos are overrepresented in the lower ranks of blue-collar jobs, including operations, laborers, farm laborers, service workers, and textile workers.64 In 2014, Latinos accounted for 16.1% of the 146.3 million employed people in the United States. Workers of Latino ethnicity made up 27.3% of the construction labor force in 2014. There are also large concentrations of Latinos in agriculture.
• Latinos in the day-worker and marginal-labor markets face discriminatory environments, wage theft, low incomes, violations of legal conditions of labor market, and violations of occupational safety regulations. The immigrant population is particularly vulnerable in this industry due to the difficulty to organize against violation of labor standards.

• Latino workers are least likely to hold jobs where employers provide health insurance; fewer than 40% of Latino workers receive health care coverage from an employer, compared to an estimated 45% of African Americans and 67% of whites.

• Over 20% of Latino seniors live in poverty, the highest proportion among all groups in the United States. Moreover, Latino workers are less likely to receive employee benefits—life insurance, health insurance, and pensions—than their African American and white counterparts.

• 2015 data reveals that Latinas earn less than their male Latino and white female and male counterparts. 31.8% of Latinas work in the service sector, and 30.4% work in sales and offices, at comparatively lower earning than their white, non-Latina counterparts. The rate of participation in the labor force for Latinas, at 59%, is similar to that of non-Latinas, at 61%. U.S.-born Latinas have a higher participation rate, at 64%. Latinas are twice as likely as non-Latinas to live in poverty.

• Latinos lost 41.3% of their average net wealth between 2007 and 2010 due to the Great Recession and because they were targets of subprime lending.

Future research directions

• Research on how Latino workers and consumers have been affected by the reduction of full-time employment and employment security and by the rise of share and GIG economies. (Share economy is a trending business concept that highlights the ability and/or preference for individuals to rent or borrow goods rather than buy and own them.)

• Research on the conditions of workers in new agricultural destinations, specifically the Midwest.

• Additional research on factors influencing the retirement outcomes of Latinos, including exploration of the impact of the changing economic landscape and the decrease of full-time traditional employment.

• Research on Latinos’ interactions with technology, using a digital inclusion framework that considers quality of connections, not just access.

• Research on the factors and conditions of both U.S.-born and immigrant Latinas in the workforce.
HIGHER EDUCATION

In the last decades, increasing tuition, decreasing state appropriation for higher education, and decreasing government support for financial aid has not only limited access for low-income students, it has limited the types of institutions they can attend and presented a real challenge for the retention of Latino students. Still, as the demographic shift continues to unfold, the number of Latinos in higher education continues to increase, even as Latinos fall behind other groups in earning Bachelor’s degrees. Graduation rates for Latino students are still low, and we do not know enough about their college experience to build better-informed strategies. Moreover, the pipeline to higher education for Latinos must be addressed both in terms of information dissemination to parents and students, and in terms of academic preparedness to best serve the growth of Latino staff, faculty, and administrative leaders.

Student profiles
What we know

- Latino students accounted for 17.3% of all undergraduates in the nation in fall 2015\textsuperscript{72} and 12% of Bachelor’s degree recipients.\textsuperscript{73} The number of Latino students almost doubled since 2000.\textsuperscript{74}

- The Latino high-school dropout rate has fallen dramatically in the last ten years, from 32% in 2000 to 12% in 2014, increasing the pool of potential college students.

- The percentage of 18- to 24-year-old Latinos enrolled in colleges and universities increased from 21.75% in 2000 to 36.6% in 2015.\textsuperscript{75}

![Latinos Enrolled in Colleges and Universities](image)

- Half of all Latino undergraduates received Pell grants in 2011.\textsuperscript{76} In 2014, two thirds of Latino students who went into the workforce or joined the military cited the need to help
support the family as a reason for not enrolling in college, compared with 39% of white students.

- Latinos from all socio-economic backgrounds represent the fastest-growing population attending community colleges today. In 2014, 31% of all first-time, full-time undergraduates were enrolled in community colleges, this includes 43% of Latinos.

- The number of Bachelor’s degrees awarded to Latino students more than doubled between 2003-04 and 2013-14.

- College attendance of Latino males continues to decrease. Latino males earned two of five Associate’s or Bachelor’s degrees awarded to Latinos in 2010.

- In 2010, 45% of Latino college students were enrolled in remedial courses. There is no national standardized data on remedial education enrollment, progress, completion, or cost. Remedial classes increase the time students’ take to obtain their degrees and decrease the likelihood of completion.

- Undocumented Latino college students face additional barriers in their college experience and an unpredictable system that varies across state and even city lines. These barriers include extreme financial hardships, psychological and social burdens, lack of access to financial assistance, and assets that are underutilized.

**Future research directions**

- More research on the Latino experience in community colleges: The types of majors/tracks that are available, transferability, pedagogical experience, educational and cultural experience.

- Research on the role of parents and their involvement in higher education, including an examination of institutionalized parent-education initiatives and other best practices.

- Further research on the effectiveness of college strategies being used to address the decrease in enrollment of Latino males.

- Research to capture data and trends on the relationship between remedial education and Latino college students, including completion rates and cost.

- New research on the experience of undocumented students suggests a set of institutional best practices is needed to increase students’ rate of completion and success.

- Research on what happens to students once they are deported and what home countries are doing.
**Latino students’ campus experience**

*What we know*

- Between 1995 and 2004, Latino students received the lowest average amount of federal aid relative to all other racial/ethnic groups.\(^{83}\)

- Latinos are often working while learning: 41% of full-time students and 80% of part-time Latino students were found to be employed while attending college.\(^{84}\)

- The rate of transfer among Latino community college students beginning in academic year 2003-2004 was 20%.\(^{85}\) The transfer processes to four-year universities are unclear at community colleges where many Latinos attend.

- Latino students who perceive their campus climate as hostile to diversity are more likely to struggle with academic, social, and emotional integration and in turn, feel less connected to their campus and less able to succeed.\(^ {86}\) Predominantly white institutions (PWIs), colleges, and universities must work especially hard on their campus culture and climate in order to fully integrate their Latino students, both academically and socially.

*Future research directions*

- Research on the experience of Latino students in higher education.

- Research on the impact of undergraduate research opportunities, on success rates, and on the impact on the pipeline to graduate studies.

- Research on the level of institutional commitment to Latino studies and knowledge production.

- A longitudinal study that includes completion and outcome and their economic impact, as well as quality of life, health, and education correlations.

- Research on the mentoring provided to Latino doctoral students. This is critical for understanding their preparation for assuming and succeeding in faculty roles.

- Work to develop a pipeline of graduating doctoral students to professoriate positions.

- Further research on the specific barriers faced by undocumented students in different educational contexts. This is essential to ensuring that students succeed in higher education. In addition, a mapping is needed of the institutions that undocumented students are attending, and of the students’ career trajectories and pathways after deportation.
Institutional context, Latino faculty and administrators

*What we know*

- The presence of Latino faculty promotes equity in higher education, increases the academic achievement of Latinos and other students of color, improves educational quality, better prepares students to live and work in an increasingly global society, exposes students to a broader range of scholarly viewpoints, and through their teaching and research, advances the progress of Latino students.\(^{87}\)

- Latino faculty members increased in numbers from 28,022 in 2009 to 33,217 in 2013,\(^{88}\) but they still made up about 5% of all faculty.

- In 2013, 57.5% of Latino faculty members were in tenure-track positions, 25.2% were instructors or lecturers, and 17.2% fell under other categories (e.g., research, public service, non-ranked positions). Among white faculty, 65.6% were in tenure-track positions, 17.6% were instructors or lecturers, and 16.8% were in other categories.\(^{89}\)

- According to a 2005 U.S. Department of Education report, 75% of white faculty members gain tenure, compared to 64% of Latino faculty. Ultimately, Latinos account for 1.4% of full-time professors.\(^{90}\)

- Latino faculty members are often expected to fill multiple roles (e.g., administration, committee work, community outreach, serving students). They are called to fill roles that other faculty members are not required to fill, reducing the time they have available for research, which is necessary for promotions.

- An equity gap in higher education among Latino administrators exist, a fact that becomes more apparent at four-year research universities. In 2013, Latinos made up only 6% of “executive, administrative, managerial” personnel in higher education.\(^{91}\)

- Most Latino presidents of institutions of higher learning serve in public, two-year colleges. A decreasing number serve in this role as we move up the academic ladder from community colleges to the elite research universities.\(^{92}\) More Latino administrators would likely mean greater support for policy changes focused on bridging educational equity gaps for Latinos at the institutional level.

- Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) make up 13% of all higher education institutions and educate 60% of the Latino college-going population. HSIs more than doubled from 189 institutions in 1994 to 409 in 2015.\(^{93}\) HSIs often lack an inherent culture of service to their designated population and proof of their success remains weak.\(^{94}\)
Future research directions

- Studies to identify barriers to Latino administrators.
- Research on the differences in educational well-being and support for Latino students in HSIs and overall impact of the financial resources coming into designated HSI institutions through mandates.
LANGUAGE

With over 50 million Spanish speakers, the United States is the second largest Spanish-speaking country in the world, after Mexico. The Spanish language continues to be a legitimizing marker of *latinidad* and of a panethnic Latino identity, while at the same time it is perceived as impeding social mobility. Although research indicates that Spanish speakers occupy a marginal place in U.S. society (i.e., they suffer from stigmatization, discrimination, inadequate bilingual resources, etc.) there has been exponential growth in dual language programs (DLPs) (where 50% to 90% of instruction is in the second language) to prepare an ever-increasing number of bilingual (mainly Spanish-language) learners for a globalized economy. Meanwhile, the growth of the U.S.-born Latino population is also changing the linguistic landscape of the Latino community. Roughly 68% of all Latinos over 5 years old are proficient in English, and according to research, 87% of Latino children born in the United States are English-dominant or at least English-proficient. The diverse linguistic capacities of the Latino community (e.g., Spanglish, non-Spanish speakers, etc.) problematize the stereotypical image of a foreign, Spanish-speaking “other.” Language provides an important lens for understanding the Latino identity and experience of immigrants and subsequent generations.

**Language and identity**

*What we know*

- Spanish language is simultaneously considered both a legitimizing marker of *latinidad* and threatening to the economic and social mobility of the community.  
- Research suggests that native and heritage Spanish speakers (even those with English proficiency) are often devalued and racialized as linguistic and racial “others.”
- Not all Latinos speak Spanish, and those who do, speak in multiple regional variations and with differing proficiencies.
- Research conducted on college students suggests that non-Spanish speaking Latinos feel excluded from a Latino identity and are less likely to identify as Latino.
- A growing number of second- and third-generation Latinos represent a new and emerging “hybrid/border culture,” with real transnational implications for a redefining of *latinidad*. As the knowledge of Spanish declines among second- and third-generation Latinos, new and different signifiers are being worked into claiming a Latino identity.
- Research suggests that Latinos who see themselves as members of a separate ethnic group are more likely to choose Spanish-language media because of expected cultural affinity.
- English- and Spanish-language television may have different effects on identity formation among Latinos but also serve as defining markers of “authentic” Latino identity for non-Latinos.
• Some research suggests media plays an active role in constructing discourses of *latinidad* and what that means within a U.S. context. For example, some scholars have noted that the media’s limited representation of non-Spanish speaking Latinos does not adequately represent the linguistic diversity of the Latino population and reinforces the idea that Latinos *must* speak Spanish.\textsuperscript{102}

• Research has shown that indigenous Latinos use the Spanish language in an attempt to blend into the United States and conform to the stereotypical Latino identity.\textsuperscript{103} In addition, many Afro-Latinos use Spanish as a way to enact their identities as separate from African Americans.\textsuperscript{104}

*Future research directions*

• Research on how language gets (re)worked into the multiple intra- and inter-Latino, and non-Latino, conceptualizations of *latinidad*.

• Research on how this “hybrid:border culture,” *latinidad*, may be influencing the stereotype of the fluent Spanish speaker in the United States and abroad.

• An assessment of how inter-group and inter-community relations may be impacted by the growth of Spanish-language acquisition among non-Latinos.

• Research on the growing portion of self-identified Latinos who do not speak Spanish and the implications for *latinidad*. For example, how do individuals use language to negotiate their *latinidad*?

• Research with a linguistic focus to better understand the experiences and adaptation processes of Latino indigenous, non-native Spanish speakers in the United States.

*Language and society*

*What we know*

• Qualitative studies indicate that many native Spanish and heritage speakers experience discrimination in academic, work, and public spaces (e.g., English-only policies).\textsuperscript{105}

• Scholars have noted a gradual shift from the strict English-only educational policies (e.g., California’s Proposition 227) to one advocating languages other than English as a resource in a globalized economy. Paradoxically, some scholars argue that there is a tendency to undervalue the cultural and linguistic assets that minority-language speakers bring to the classroom and later, to society.\textsuperscript{106}

• Due to the demographic changes within the United States, Latino children have the linguistic and cultural capabilities to succeed in a diversifying ethnic, racial, and linguistic landscape.

• Bilingual speakers are in a better position to acquire employment than monolingual speakers.
Future research directions

- More research on how English-only policies are affecting Latinos in the educational setting and work spaces.

- More inter-Latino comparative work, as well as comparative work on how non-Latino immigrants are affected by the lack of bilingual and bicultural services, as well as more research on the impact of multilingual policies, such as DLPs, on Latino well-being and incorporation.

- More qualitative and longitudinal research to assess the long-term impact of bilingualism and biliteracy beyond primary school and into higher education and work-place settings.

Language acquisition
What we know

- Research conducted in South Florida suggests that the vocabulary skills of the dominant language for young children who learn two languages at once is within the normal variation range of monolingual children. The research supports previous studies that indicate children learning two or more languages can actually differentiate between language systems and vocabularies.\(^{107}\)

- Since the 1990s, there has been a considerable growth in DLPs.\(^{108}\) These programs facilitate bilingual fluency/biliteracy and are broadly divided into:
  - One-way immersion programs where students are of one linguistic group and bilingual instruction facilitates the learning of a second language (e.g., heritage language learners).
  - Two-way immersion programs where native speakers of both majority and minority languages are enrolled in the same class to promote bilingual fluency (e.g., dual language immersion [DLIs]).

- Research has shown that DLIs that provide roughly 50% to 90% content in the home language result in better academic gains, not only in the minority language, but in the majority language as well. Despite this data, the majority of educational policies continue to push English-only education.\(^{109}\)

- Generally, English Language Learners (ELLs) have lower oral language skills in the home language and the second language. However, some scholars argue that the effectiveness of language assessment tests (often administered in English only) need to be reevaluated.\(^{110}\) For example, research conducted on emergent bilingual children in a DLI program and published in 2016 suggests that bilingual assessments offer a more adequate measurement of oral narrative retelling skills and better inform the modes of instruction.\(^{111}\)
Future research directions

• With a significant portion of U.S. household being bilingual and multilingual, more research is needed on both language acquisition and the cognitive benefits for children who learn two or more languages simultaneously.

• More research to better understand the experiences of the dual language teachers and their management of the policies, preparation, and practices of dual language learning (DLL) education.\textsuperscript{112}
VISUAL ARTS AND ARTISTS

Research on the aesthetic practices of self-identified Latino visual artists demonstrates that they have been actively invested in American art as the largest minority group in the United States. Yet their artistic production often appears to be on the margins of a still rigid and narrowly defined Eurocentric field and art market in need of recalibration. Latino artists—U.S.-born and diasporic—participated in major 20th century art movements experimenting with various forms of expression, media, and techniques, and contributing to intellectual debates on the meaning of art. Like other U.S. artists, they have made keen visual observations on community, society, and contemporary times. Even though a great number of Latino artists have attended art school and hold advanced degrees, research also reveals that, for the most part, they are notably absent from mainstream U.S. art narratives, evolving canons, larger museum exhibitions, and permanent collections.

Artists and art practices

What we know

- The scholarship in the last fifteen years reveals an upward trend on the documentation of Latino artists and their production and practices, sustained by an intellectual infrastructure of preservation of primary documents, digitization and archival projects, and publication initiatives.113

- The research registers a preoccupation with definitions of what constitutes Latino art as inherent in American art. Scholars agree that an “essentially” Latino aesthetic perspective is not, and has never been, a reality.114

- Latino art, as an art historical category, is a construct whose coordinates change according to new generations.115

- Artists are exploring shifting paradigms of identity by disrupting normative narratives of a culturally constructed U.S. identity.116

- Research indicates a questioning in the literature about an evolving Latino art canon that privileges Northeast and Southwest regions, yet excludes the Midwest, the Southeast, and groups such as artists of Central American and South American descent.117

- Artists of the Dominican, Puerto Rican, Nuyorican, and Cuban diaspora are interested in themes of memory, movement, and displacement framed as absence, borders, migration, and exile/loss.118

- Research suggests some Latino artists are increasingly invested in artivism and social justice.119

- Recent research and curatorial frameworks to analyze the production of Latino artists include urbanism and urban space, science fiction, feminism, LGBTQ collectives and their networks, and the transnational art connections between place of residence and home country.120
Future research directions

- In this emerging field of study, more rigorous monographic research on Latino artists is needed to allow for in-depth analysis of a lifelong arc of individual artistic production.

- To fully comprehend the overall development, relations, and intersections of Latino artists in the United States, research would benefit from additional mapping and archival projects on Latino artists and art organizations in urban and rural areas and regions that have been under-studied, including the Pacific Northwest, Southeast, and Northeast.

- To help measure the impact of the last fifteen years of archival, research, and curatorial projects asking questions about the recognition of older generation and emerging artists in the art world, a longitudinal study of Latino artists should be conducted, taking as its bases the investigation of citations and textbooks.

- As American art continues to expand its geographic and transnational boundaries, more research is needed on the links of Latino diasporic artists with their countries of origin and on how they contribute to the circulation of contemporary art, including the impact on their home countries and the United States.

- More research is needed on contemporary artists and the impact of globalization and technology.

Latino art, institutions, and market

What we know

- In the last twenty years, research on themes related to the politics of representation and Latino national belonging in mainstream national museums indicate a minimal presence of Latino artists in exhibitions and permanent collections.\(^{121}\)

- Recent research on Latino art in academia is marginal or invisible, and “lags alarmingly,” thus reflecting a thin higher-education pipeline. A study reveals limited MA and PhD programs on Latino art history, with 24 art historians teaching at least one course on, or including, Latino art, and only three exclusively teaching and writing on Latino art.\(^{122}\)

- A 2016-2017 study points to a limited participation of Latino artists in the booming contemporary art market, revealing that only 1.6% of artists represented in the top 45 galleries in New York are Latino.\(^{123}\)
• A foundation study on museum demographics found that only 3% of curators, conservators, educators, and leaders in U.S. museums are Latino.\textsuperscript{124}

**Latinos only 3% of Museum Curators, Conservators, and Leaders**

- White
- Asian
- Black
- Latino
- Two or More Races

84% 3% 3% 4% 6%

Future research directions

• Research on the structural barriers to acquisitions and representation of Latinos in mainstream museums and the presence of Latino art in mostly elite art history programs in academia.

• Studies on the impact of the defunding of the humanities on Latino artists and art, and on their representation in the art world.

• More research on how Latino artists are participating (or not) in the circuits and networks of global contemporary art and art market.

Placemaking/placekeeping

*What we know*

• Research reveals that since the late 1960s, Latino artists and cultural workers have created their own community-based museums and cultural centers to provide critical education and a sense of belonging.\textsuperscript{125}

• Research suggests that sustaining and investing in existing art and cultural grassroots organizations contribute to stabilization and successful creative placemaking and placekeeping.\textsuperscript{126}
• Latino artists and art organizations have an economic, social, and cultural impact. Yet when it comes to community development, there is not enough research data to quantify it into dollar amounts.¹²⁷

Future research directions

• New data is needed to quantify the monetary impact of artists in placekeeping and community strengthening in traditional Latino neighborhoods in cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Miami, and Austin.

• New research on the ways Latino creative placemaking is impacting neighborhood revitalization.

• New research to identify whether ethnic cultural institutions continue (or not) to sustain a contemporary identity formation as agents of social change.

• More research on street art and urban interaction and the ways that marginalized art forms become mainstream.
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**GLOBAL ECONOMY**


**HIGHER EDUCATION**


**LANGUAGE**


**VISUAL ARTS AND ARTISTS**


38


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END NOTES

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