

### **UP-III CHICANO STUDIES PROGRAM ACADEMIC PLAN 2009 – 20014**

#### **Submitted October 7, 2008**

**Mission and aspirations:** The Chicano Studies Program mission is to create a high quality teaching, research, and service program that makes available to students, the university community, the people of Wyoming, and the broader national audience substantive knowledge about the historical cultural, political, and socioeconomic development of Chicanas/os.

The Chicano Studies Program aspires 1) to provide education regarding the history, culture and socioeconomic status of Chicanos by offering significant, quality courses on a consistent basis; 2) to serve the educational need of the Mexican American population in the state and region by supporting and sponsoring student events which promote and affirm a robust Chicano identity; 3) to disseminate information about the Mexican American Latina/o experience by participating in local, state, and national forums for scholarly work; 4) to enhance student recruitment at the University of Wyoming by supporting and participating in high school and university activities and mentorships focused on Latina/Chicano student experiences and pathways to success; 5) to advance and support research and other scholarly activities by generating new knowledge and perspectives regarding the Latina/Chicano experience; and 6) to build partnerships at University of Wyoming and throughout the state by interacting with departments and colleges, as well as local and state organizations and communities.

**Previous planning accomplishments:** The program's laudable success in recent years is due to the successful completion of, and ongoing progress with action items proposed in UP-II. The program has been successful in 1) developing and implementing a student learning assessment plan that will soon begin its second iteration; 2) streamlining its minor curriculum that has increased the number of minors; 3) and strengthening interdisciplinary curriculum partnerships that has resulted in the development of a Social Justice Freshman Interest Group, a University Studies Program Intellectual Community course, and a Latino Diaspora study abroad course. The Chicano Studies program is poised for the next step in its development as an academic unit; 4) creating a graduate minor.

**Relevant institutional issues:** Today, U.S. Latinos are the largest racial/ethnic minority group nationally, and in many cases, regionally and locally. Historically Chicanos, or Mexican Americans, have been the largest Latino ethnic group nationally, throughout the trans-Mississippi West, within the inter-Rocky Mountain region, and in Wyoming. Moreover, Wyoming Department of Education enrollment statistics show that the non-Hispanic White K-12 student population declined by 19.8 percent from 1991 to 2007. The Hispanic K-12 student population, however, increased by 41.6 percent over the same time period.

With this trend in mind, the Chicano Studies Program recognizes the vital role it plays in enhancing access to higher education for this underserved population. Adding curricular depth and breadth can enhance the program's capability to deliver broad undergraduate and graduate minors. With strong undergraduate and graduate minor degree programs to attract high quality students, the Chicano Studies program can enhance its research activity. Finally, the Chicano Studies program is part of the vanguard for excellence in diversity, internationalization, and

interdisciplinarity. With continued program and student learning assessment, we envision a stronger presence in these efforts for the years to come.

### **CHST UP III Action Items**

- CHST-1** Provide more instructional depth and breadth by strengthening and exploring new curriculum and faculty partnerships within and outside of traditional core disciplinary areas of the humanities, social sciences, and history.

The Chicano Studies Program seeks to be an active participant with university, college, departmental, and programmatic units in developing a instructional staffing plan for the ethnic studies programs. Exit interviews with graduating minors have indicated the desire for a broader range of courses to fulfill curricular requirements. Interest has emerged for a Chicano Studies graduate minor. A broader Chicano Studies curriculum can enhance further the program's high quality undergraduate teaching, research, and service mission, and strengthen college and university goals with regards to graduate education, diversity, interdisciplinarity, and internationalization. Diverse faculty teaching and research interests can help reinforce and refine excellence in cultural assets, arts, and humanities; history and culture of the Rocky Mountain region; and professions critical to the state and region areas of distinction.

- CHST-2** Enhance the interdisciplinarity and internationalization of the curriculum by increasing curricular and co-curricular collaboration with academic units, research entities, and student affairs organizations.

The recent and noticeable rise of the Chicano Studies program's stature has been attributable to a number of sponsored activities that include, but are not limited to, service learning, study abroad, undergraduate and graduate research, conferences, lectures, and cultural programming. The capability to sponsor these activities has come about, in large part, to the generosity and collaboration of multiple institutional financial and non-financial sources of support—PACMWA; Academic Affairs; International Programs Office; Multicultural Affairs; Sigma Gamma Lambda National Sorority, Inc.; MEChA. Additional sources of support can facilitate continued and new collaborations for these activities within and outside of the College of Arts and Sciences (i.e., Outreach School, Social Justice Research Center, McNair Scholars, EPSCoR, School for Energy Resources; KOCA Radio Montañesa; Lincoln Community Center; Wyoming Latina/o Coalition). A sustained high profile can increase efforts towards Latina/o student recruitment.

- CHST-3** Further refine Chicano Studies minor curricular requirements by analyzing direct and indirect student learning assessment data and incorporating any necessary adjustments.

Assessment of selected course assignments in lower- and upper-level division courses indicate that student learning outcomes are being sufficiently addressed. Exit

interviews with graduating minors indicate the need for a broader array and regular rotation of courses for increased satisfaction. Continued assessment activities will include graduate student learning outcomes.

- CHST-4** Continue to provide foundational knowledge about Chicanas/os to all students by linking all Chicanos Studies courses to the University Studies Program (USP) Diversity (D) requirement.

Latinas/os are at the forefront of many important issues facing U.S. society today. It is essential that UW students have a better understanding of the history, culture, and socioeconomic status of the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. This can go far in training individuals in professions critical to the region (i.e., education, health, business administration, environment and natural resources, tourism, labor relations, law enforcement, etc.)

- CHST-5** Empower the Chicano Studies advisory board by providing funding to investigate the feasibility of a program name change and a major degree program, and to create a development strategy for short- and long-term gift-giving.

Local, regional, national, and global factors have produced a trend among institutions of higher learning to create and/or re-structure academic units whose primary teaching, research, and service mission revolves around the fast growing Latino Diaspora. Discussion at UW has been raised as to whether or not a name change to Chicano/Latino Studies would attract more students for both a minor and a major degree program; additional faculty members who have a broader Latina/o Studies instructional and research focus; and/or donors who do not strictly identify with a Chicana/o ethnic identity. Support budget funds will be allocated to match funds sought from the PACMWA to assist the Chicano Studies advisory board in this charge.

| <b><u>Proposed Timeline and Implementation</u></b> |                         |            |            |            |            |
|--|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  | AY 09 - 10              | AY 10 - 11 | AY 11 - 12 | AY 12 - 13 | AY 13 - 14 |
| CHST-1   | X                       | X          | X          | X          | X          |
| CHST-2   | X                       | X          | X          | X          | X          |
| CHST-3   | Graduate Minor Approved | X          | X          | X          | X          |
| CHST-4   | X                       |            |            |            |            |
| CHST-5   | X                       | X          | X          | X          | X          |

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Dr. Philip Holt, Professor & Chair  
Department of Modern & Classical Languages  
Dept. 3603, 1000 East University Avenue  
Laramie, WY 82071-3603  
Room 231, Hoyt Hall • (307) 766-4852 • fax (307) 766-2727 • e-mail: pholt@uwyo.edu • www.uwyo.edu

March 28, 2008

To whom it may concern:

The Department of Modern & Classical Languages is pleased to support a joint appointment in Chicano Studies and Spanish, with Chicano Studies as the home Department. Ed Munoz has discussed the possibilities, both with me and with the Spanish section. A joint hire will give us a chance to develop some exciting new capabilities in Spanish which, given our priorities, are not open to us with a hire in Spanish alone.

The Chicano Studies Program is interested in expanding its scope to take in Latino Studies, the study of other Latino ethnic groups in the U.S. besides Mexican Americans. Many of these groups speak Spanish—which is, after all, the second-most widely spoken language in the United States, and whose use is rapidly growing. More and more, the United States forms part of the world-wide Spanish-speaking community extending from Spain to the Philippines. Mexican culture spans both sides of the Rio Grande, a fact recognized by the creation of the budding scholarly field of Border Studies—an area which we can already explore from the southern side, with Mexico specialists in both Languages (Emily Hind) and History (Adrian Bantjes). U.S. Latino Studies incorporates the growing transnational experience not only of Mexicans, but of Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Central and South Americans as well. More important, Latino Studies places the U.S. experience of Latino ethnic groups at the center of analysis. There is little doubt of the burgeoning impact that Latino culture has had on the American cultural scene in recent years—an impact that can be seen in literature, music, dance, food, traditions, and holidays.

So there is certainly room for a person who can teach and study Latino cultures in the U.S., both as a part of U.S. culture and as part of the wider array of Spanish-speaking cultures generally. This will be a true interdisciplinary appointment, beneficial to both Chicano Studies and Spanish.

Yours truly,

Philip Holt

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

**Department of Political Science**  
Dept. 3197  
1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, WY 82071  
(307) 766-6484 • fax (307) 766-6771  
[www.uwyo.edu/pols](http://www.uwyo.edu/pols)

March 24, 2008

Professor Ed Munoz, Director  
Chicano Studies Program  
University of Wyoming  
Dept. 4297, 1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, WY 82071

Dear Ed,

The Political Science Department endorses the Chicano Studies Program's request for a faculty position with expertise in Latino politics. Such a person could offer classes in Latino and/or minority politics and immigration policy for the Political Science undergraduate and graduate programs. These subjects have grown as political and academic interests but there is no member of our faculty with the necessary expertise to offer such courses. We would welcome an opportunity to have a Chicano Studies faculty member each year offering one or two classes on these subjects for the Political Science curricula, perhaps cross-listed between our respective programs. We understand that this faculty member's permanent line would be in Chicano Studies, his/her offerings in Latino politics and immigration policy would be secondary to the broader needs and interests of the Chicano Studies curriculum, and his/her service and advising obligations would be to the Chicano Studies Program. The Political Science Department will contribute 25% to the start-up for this position.

Because other gaps in our curricula present more immediate problems to meeting our instructional mission, we cannot rank a position in Latino politics at the top of our CPM requests. However, we recognize the need in the College of Arts and Sciences for the courses a faculty member with this expertise would offer and endorse your proposal.

Sincerely,

James D. King  
Professor and Department Head

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Creative Writing Program  
Department of English - 3353  
1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, WY 82071-2000  
307 766 2867 • fax 307 766 3189  
[www.uwyo.edu/creativewriting](http://www.uwyo.edu/creativewriting)

H. L. Hix, Director  
307.766.5247  
[hhix@uwyo.edu](mailto:hhix@uwyo.edu)

20 February 2008

Ed Muñoz, Director  
Chicano Studies

Dear Ed:

I write simply to confirm the tenor of our recent conversation about your proposed graduate minor. The MFA program in creative writing supports your proposal.

As of course you know, our current student Marissa Johnson-Valenzuela is actively interested in pursuing this minor. I should add, though, that I anticipate there being continued interest into the future. We have more than one viable Hispanic applicant for this year's entering class, and as we increase the number of Hispanic students in the program, we expect dialogue about and interest in issues related to Chicano Studies to increase among all our students — Hispanic and non-Hispanic students alike.

Please accept this expression of support for your proposed minor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Hix', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Harvey Hix