

2020-21

Annual Report

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
LATIN AMERICAN & IBERIAN INSTITUTE





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About the LAII



Because of the geographic location and unique cultural history of New Mexico, The University of New Mexico (UNM) has emphasized Latin American Studies since the early 1930s. In 1979, the Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAII) was founded to coordinate Latin American programs on campus. The LAII promotes and supports interdisciplinary teaching, research and meaningful public engagement to advance the production and dissemination of knowledge about Latin America and Iberia. Latin America is designated as one of seven priority areas of research for UNM and the LAII has proudly contributed to the university's intellectual community as well as global discourse throughout its 40-year history.

The LAII offers academic degrees, supports research, and provides development opportunities for faculty. In addition to the Latin American Studies (LAS) degrees offered, the Institute supports Latin Americanists in departments and professional schools by awarding student fellowships and providing funds for faculty and curriculum development. The LAII is also committed to expanding awareness, knowledge, and understanding of Latin America and Iberia among diverse constituents through its community education programs and outreach initiatives.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW
MEXICO HAS EMPHASIZED
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
SINCE THE 1930s.

Letter from the Director



Dear Alumni and Friends,

I hope you and yours are well and keeping your spirits up.

I write to share with you our Annual Report for 2020-2021, a year marked by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. We hope that our services and activities provided a bit of connection and normalcy during a very challenging year. We are fortunate that UNM had the resources and capacity to allow the university to function online, enabling us to stay connected

with the LAll community on campus and around the world. We thank the people who kept and continue to keep the university running while prioritizing health and safety.

Moving online provided the benefit of being able to reach a large and diverse audience. The number of Zoom attendees and viewers of event recordings on our YouTube channel total over 7500 people to date, many more than would be able to attend in-person events in a normal year, with viewers from around the world. The highlight of our programming last year was a series on im/migration and human rights, co-sponsored with UNM's Maxwell Museum of Anthropology and the Alfonso Ortiz Center for Intercultural Studies. Speakers included filmmakers, academics, forensic anthropologists, and activists who brought attention to the ongoing humanitarian crisis on the US southern border. In addition, LAll affiliated faculty shared their research with the public in a series co-sponsored with the National Hispanic Cultural Center, and UNM's Department of History and the Center for the Southwest. K-12 teachers joined LAll curriculum workshops

on Frida Kahlo (held with the Albuquerque Museum) and Afro-Latinidad. Students benefited from a career preparation series featuring speakers (mostly UNM alumni) working in a range of positions who shared their experiences, expertise, and advice (and to any alumni or others willing to volunteer for future panels, please get in touch!) We thank all who participated as speakers or as audience members and encourage you to take a look at our YouTube page to find recordings of past events.

We were pleased to welcome a number of accomplished new faculty to UNM and to the LAll faculty concilium last year, including Miriam Gay Antaki (Geography and Environmental Studies), Paul Figueroa (Law), Francisco Galarte (American Studies and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies), Armando Garza Ayala (Language, Literature, and Sociocultural Studies), Robert Alexander Gonzáles (the new Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning), Maricarmen Hernández and Eli Wilson (Sociology), Katherine Massoth (History), Alejandro Tomás Rodríguez (Theatre), and José Luis Serrano Nájera (Chicana and Chicano Studies). Despite starting their UNM careers at the height of the pandemic, many of these and other recent faculty have already contributed to promoting Latin American and Iberian studies at UNM through courses, LAll talks, and serving on LAll committees. We thank them all and the other faculty and students who contributed to the LAll mission through contributing to events and service on committees.

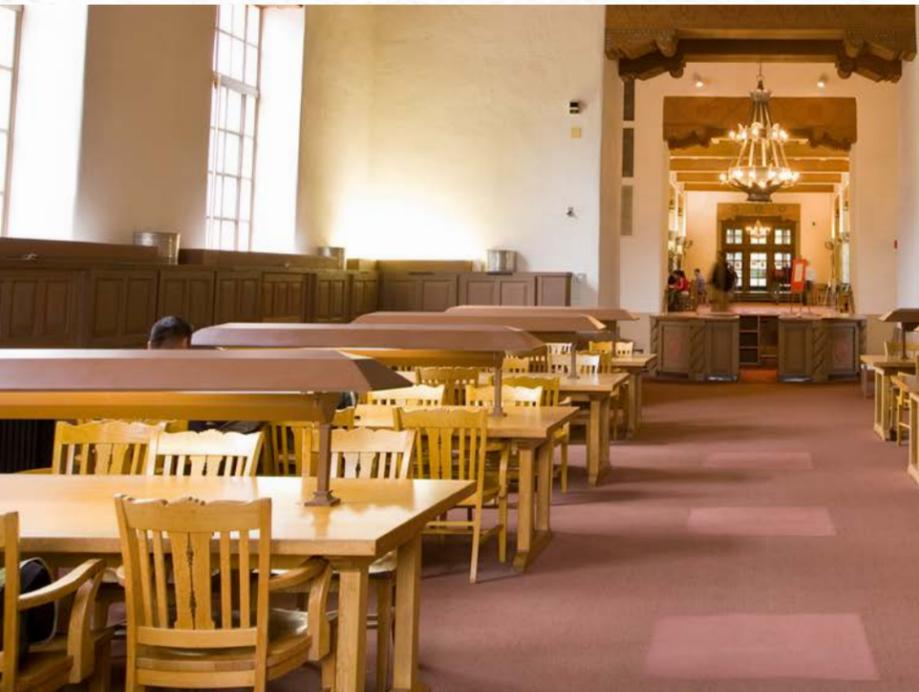
I want to acknowledge the heroic efforts of the 2020-2021 LAll professional and student staff (listed at the end of the report), who kept everything running at the LAll and supported our campus partners while working remotely and facing the various challenges brought on by the pandemic. Life was particularly difficult for our student staff members, who missed out on the normal, everyday interactions of campus life and the company of their peers. I am deeply grateful for their contributions during a very tough year.

Writing this note in mid-December 2021, it looks like it may be a while before we can return to in-person events. In the meantime, we will continue to hold our talks and other activities online and share the recordings to make it possible for all of you to learn more about Latin America and Iberia and connect with us and each other. To find out about upcoming events and opportunities, you can sign up for the LAll Weekly Digest on our homepage (<https://lail.unm.edu>) or follow us on social media @unmlaii.

Wishing you health and happiness in 2022,

Frances Hayashida
Director, Latin American & Iberian Institute
Professor of Anthropology
The University of New Mexico

Latin American Studies at UNM



The LAII's Latin American Studies (LAS) program is a nationally prominent, competitive, interdisciplinary program that offers BA, MA, and PhD degrees which are conferred by the College of Arts & Sciences. In addition to the MA in Latin American Studies, we offer dual degree options with five programs (Business Administration, Community & Regional Planning, Education, Law, and Public Health) in which students simultaneously earn the MA in LAS and a professional degree. The LAS academic program builds on UNM's long history of academic excellence in teaching, study, and research related to Latin America and Iberia.

Students within the academic program benefit from a uniquely broad distribution of Latin American expertise across disciplines and colleges, as well as from having access to one of the premier Latin America-focused library collections in the US. The degree programs are designed to be both rigorous and flexible, with robust foreign language study requirements and faculty advisement. Students are able to build an academic program that meets their immediate academic interests while cultivating skills necessary for future career endeavors.

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES CONTENT COURSES

Students enroll in Latin American Studies (LAS) courses through various partner departments. Undergraduate and graduate students choose from dozens of course options each semester that engage interdisciplinary lenses to examine essential questions relevant to Latin America, the broader hemisphere, and the world - to better understand cultures, build societal and historical context, question human rights issues, governmental responsibilities, language preservation, health equity, and more. Throughout their coursework, LAS students become equipped with a malleable and marketable skill set, prepared to work for inter-American relations and mutual interests across public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Below are a couple of highlights of courses offered in 2020-2021.

SPAN 579 | Mexican-American Cultural Studies Methodology

Anna Nogar in collaboration with Lorena Ojeda-Dávila (professor at the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo and former UNM Mexico Studies Chair)

This course presented an introduction to and survey of contemporary Mexican American cultural studies research. The objective of the course was for students to understand encompassing critical structures defining the field of contemporary cultural studies generally, and Mexican American cultural studies more particularly, and to study their large-scale applications in specific book-length studies. Using a seminar format guided by self-generated questions and discussion leadership, the class sought to understand and critically interpret the subjects and methodological approaches implemented in these studies. Through the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program, the course brought together students from UNM and Mexico to foster international conversation and cultural exchange and gave participants a chance to interact across borders despite pandemic restrictions.



PH 55 | Public Health Evaluation Methods

Francisco Soto Mas

Effective program evaluation is a systematic way to improve and account for public health actions by involving procedures that are useful, feasible, ethical, and accurate (CDC, 1999). The goal of this course was to introduce students to the theories, principles, methods, and procedures to plan and evaluate health-related programs. Topics included history of health program planning and evaluation, research ethics/IRB, planning models, types of evaluation (including participatory evaluation), and evaluation designs. Students gained practical experience through a series of activities that include case studies and the development of a plan for a health-related program that included a sound evaluation.

LAS GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate students in the UNM LAS program are diverse, drawing upon a range of academic, professional, and personal experiences related to Latin America. Each semester we welcome a new cohort, support those with degrees underway, and bid farewell to our graduating class. To learn more about each student, visit the LAll website.

INCOMING



**Alejandra Acuña
Balbuena**
MALAS



Joselin Castillo
MALAS



Jasmine Morse
MALAS



Miles Nowlin
MALAS



**Helena Omaña
Zapata**
MALAS



Alexandra Rivas
MALAS



Soledad Roybal
MALAS



Kelsey Varisco
MALAS

IN PROGRESS



Ericka Arias
MALAS/MCRP
History; Urbanism &
Community Development



Javier Astorga
PhD
Geography &
Environmental Studies;
Built Environment



Dominic Baca
MALAS/MBA
Human Rights;
International Manage-
ment



Alin Badillo Carillo
MALAS
Public Health; Urbanism
and Community
Development



Elisa Cibils
MALAS/JD
History; Human Rights



Robert Donnelly
PhD
Sociology; Political
Science



Moira Garcia
MALAS
Art History;
Indigenous Studies



**Brenda Macias
Lopez**
MALAS/JD
Human Rights;
Spanish American
Literature

NEW ALUMNI



Fiore Bran-Aragón
MALAS
Human Rights;
Anthropology



Jeremy Falson
MALAS
Sociology; Political
Science



David Lindwall
MALAS
History; Political Science



Jackie Munro
MALAS
Geography &
Environmental Studies;
Human Rights



Phillip Salazar
MALAS
Indigenous Studies



Alexandra Villegas
MALAS/MPH
Public Health;
Geography &
Environmental Studies

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: RONDA BRULOTTE



Ronda Brulotte joined UNM in 2007 and is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. Dr. Brulotte has also served as Associate Director for Academic Programs at LAII since 2016, overseeing the Latin American Studies undergraduate and graduate program and serving as Chair of the Interdisciplinary Committee on Latin American Studies, the faculty governance body for LAS. She also served as LAII Interim Director from Fall 2019-Spring 2020.

What region or population of Latin America and/or Iberia do you study? Why?

"I have primarily focused on Mexico, specifically Southern Mexico, although I am trained broadly as a Latin Americanist. My interests are in craft economies in Mexico, particularly in the state of Oaxaca, which has long standing rich craft traditions that now have ties to global tourist and art markets.

As an undergraduate, I studied abroad in Oaxaca and we visited several artisan communities with a local anthropologist. I became interested in the different kinds of crafts that were being made in each town and I was especially interested in Oaxacan wood carving - I even wrote an undergraduate paper on it. I decided to continue working on these topics for my master's project and my PhD."

What motivates you in your current work/research?

"I'm currently finishing up a book manuscript on the globalization of the Oaxacan mezcal industry. In addition to crafts, I'm very interested in food and drink, and I think this project really brings together those two interests of looking at cuisine and how craft products enter into wider markets beyond the local context in which they are produced. I see mezcal as an instance of another Oaxacan craft that is having its "moment" and that has so many implications for the people that make it, the people that consume it, and the people in the supply chain.

I started this project in 2011. At that time, if you asked anyone if they knew what mezcal was, very few people would have known about it and even fewer people would have had tried it. Now you can find it in restaurants and liquor stores all over, so I've watched it go from something very few people knew about to something people actively seek out. I'm interested in that process of how people become aware of this very artisanal product and what that means for the place of production."

What is one piece of advice you have for young scholars in the field of Latin America and/or Iberia?

"I think the most important skill, regardless of what field you are going into, is strong language skills. Even if you don't think you'll be talking to people directly, the ability to communicate effectively in the language as its spoken in the place that you're working is very important. I can't stress that enough to anyone doing any kind of scholarship because it's important to be able to share your work with those who may not speak your own native language. "

What has been your favorite part about leading the LAS program?

"I really enjoyed working with the students. Because we are an interdisciplinary program, students come with a diverse set of interests and professional/academic experience and they often have a way of thinking that is often more holistic. Thinking through something from a regional or area studies perspective is different than thinking about an issue through a geography or an anthropology perspective. Even though you would think you would end up in the same place, that's not always necessarily the case. I really like working with the students that have these diverse backgrounds and watching them take the next step in their professional careers and seeing where they go. That's been really exciting."



New LAII Faculty & Affiliated Scholars

Faculty

- Paul Figueroa, Law
- Francisco Galarte, American Studies and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
- Armando Garza Ayala, Language, Literature, and Sociocultural Studies
- Miriam Gay Antaki, Geography and Environmental Studies
- Robert Alexander González, Architecture and Planning
- Maricarmen Hernández, Sociology
- Katherine Massoth, History
- Luis Serrano Nájera, Chicana and Chicano Studies
- Alejandro Tomás Rodríguez, Theatre
- Eli Wilson, Sociology

Richard E. Greenleaf Visiting Library Scholars

- Elizabeth Gackstetter Nichols | Professor of Spanish | Drury University
"Beauty, Costume and Popular Culture in Latin America"

- Rachel Bonner | Ph.D. Student, History of Art & Visual Culture | University of California, Santa Cruz
"Traversing the 'Land of Enchantment': Space, Time, and Movement at US Heritage Sites Along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro"

Latin American Studies at CNM



The LAll partnered with Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) in 2014 to strengthen the relationship and leverage resources between the UNM and CNM Latin American Studies programs, the latter established at that time.

Housed within the CNM School of Communication, Humanities & Social Sciences (CHSS), the program provides students with an interdisciplinary foundation for understanding the Latin American region through cultural anthropology, history, geography, language, and literature, among other disciplines. Students gain language skills and area competencies valuable in business, public service, and/or further training.

CNM students who seek to continue their Latin American Studies at UNM receive coordinated advisement from staff in each program. This seamless student support is made possible thanks to the close working relationship of CNM and UNM LAS administrators, particularly the leadership of Dr. Erica Volkers, Dean of CHSS, and the perspective brought by Dr. Brandon Morgan, who serves as the Latin American Studies Chair, as well as History, Cultural Studies, Anthropology, Political Science, and Economics. This partnership has been strengthened through the UNM/CNM Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant, "New Mexico Humanities Now!" which supports CNM students across Humanities disciplines to transfer to UNM and continue their studies.

CNM•UNM LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES LECTURE SERIES

As part of the effort to bridge the programs at each campus, the LAll regularly coordinates the CNM/UNM LAS Lecture Series, in which faculty and graduate students from UNM visit CNM to present their research and experiences as Latin Americanist scholars. The series also includes events that introduces opportunities available to CNM students. The 2020-2021 CNM/UNM LAS Lecture Series included:

- **Researching Paraguayan Guarani: The Minoritized Language of the Majority** | Josefina Bittar (Linguistics)
- **Writing, Researching and Reading Bilingual, Regional Children's Literature** | Anna M. Nogar (Spanish & Portuguese)
- **Rethinking Afro-Latino Culture in Mexico, the U.S. Southwest, and Brazil** | Dr. Doris Careaga (Chicana & Chicano Studies), Dr. Paulo "MC" Dutra (Spanish & Portuguese), and Dr. Kathy McKnight (Spanish & Portuguese)
- **Why Democrats and Republicans in Congress Work Together to Press President Eisenhower in 1954 to Overthrow Jacobo Árbenz** | David Lindwall (Latin American Studies)
- **Burying Pinochet's Legacy: Chile's New Constitution** | Sergio J Ascencio (Political Science)
- **Locating the Martial Middle Class: A Case for Bringing Military Families into Argentina's History of Counterinsurgency and Cold War Modernization** | Dylan Maynard (History)

**215 STUDENTS AND
FACULTY ENGAGED WITH
EACH OTHER THROUGH
PUBLIC EVENTS AND
COURSE PRESENTATIONS**



Student Research & Awards



The LAII stimulates Latin American research and scholarship by supporting students within the Latin American Studies program and from affiliated departments across campus. Funding may take the form of fellowships or scholarship for field research, advanced doctoral studies, or professional development at conferences.

Students at both undergraduate and graduate levels benefit from this interdisciplinary, cross-campus support.

**WE FUNDED 14 STUDENTS
FROM ACROSS CAMPUS,
FACILITATING RESEARCH,
TRAVEL, AND STUDY**

FIELD RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

Each spring the LAII awards Field Research Grants (FRGs) to graduate students across campus who pursue research in Latin America. FRGs provide graduate students an opportunity to acquire a comprehensive knowledge of Latin American languages, terrain, and cultures; to become familiar with information sources relevant to their studies; to conduct pilot studies and preliminary investigations that will inform their thesis or dissertation proposals; and to develop contacts with scholars and institutions in their fields of study. Unfortunately, these students weren't able to participate in their planned field research due to the COVID-19 pandemic but hope to do so as soon as it is deemed safe to travel again.

JOSUE ACIEGO

Anthropology | "Are They Indians?": Indigenous Erasure and Resilience in El Salvador"

ALEJANDRA ACUÑA BALBUENA

Latin American Studies | "Los Pobres no son Pobres Porque Quieren: Situated Discourses of Environmental Injustice in the Neighborhoods Surrounding the Cateura Landfill in Asuncion, Paraguay"

ANDREW GORVETZIAN

Anthropology | "In the Eye of Two Storms: Garifuna Persistence in the Face of Climate Change and Marginalization"

BREANNA REISS

Art History | Preliminary Research for "The Social Life of Plants: Botanical Representations in Moche Art"

PHD FELLOWS

LAII PhD Fellowships are highly competitive awards given to doctoral students across campus to support Latin America-related dissertation research and writing. The following students held fellowships during the 2020-2021 academic year.

ASIA ALSGAARD

Anthropology | "The Role of Coastal Resource Stability in the Transition to Agriculture, Soconusco, Mexico"

JOSEFINA BITTAR

Linguistics | "A Constructionist Approach to Verbal Borrowing: The Case of Paraguayan Guarani"

MILENA CARVALHO

Anthropology | "The Role of Subsistence in the Neanderthal Extinction"

CARLOS CONTRERAS VIDAL

Political Science | "International Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment in Mexican Universities"

CARLOS ENRIQUE IBARRA

Spanish and Portuguese | "Intergenerational linguistic identity, attitudes, usage, and language preservation among bilingual and trilingual Mixtecos in Woodburn, Oregon"

DYLAN MAYNARD

History | “The Martial Middle Class: Military Families, Modernization, and Counterinsurgency in Cold War Argentina”

DAVID PAEZ

Linguistics | “Imitative expression in Colombian Spanish”

ZSOFIA SZOKE

Anthropology | “The Lithium Economy: Bolivia’s “New” Resource and its Role in the Creation of the Plurinational State and Revolutionary Politics”

JON WILLIAMS

Sociology | ““Build the Wall!”: The Mexico – U.S. Border and its Role in the Evolution of American Nationalism”

CARTER BARNWELL

History | “War of Words: Gender, Culture, and Transnationalism in the Discourse of Spanish Anti-fascism, 1923-1946”

Faculty Research & Awards



The LAll is sustained and enhanced by the research, teaching, and service of its affiliated faculty across campus. Over one hundred faculty contribute to these efforts and are affiliated with the Institute. To support this broad community, the LAll awards funding for field research, conference travel, course development, interdisciplinary projects, and more.

WE HAVE 100+
AFFILIATED FACULTY WHO
REPRESENT OVER 40
DEPARTMENTS



PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

The LAII provided professional development funds to two faculty to attend professional conferences in the U.S. and abroad.

KIMBERLE LÓPEZ

Spanish and Portuguese | Southwest Council of Latin American Studies

MIGUEL LÓPEZ

Spanish and Portuguese | Southwest Council of Latin American Studies

FIELD RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

The LAII annually holds a competition for faculty grants to support beginning field research on new projects or to complete, supplement, or add a comparative dimension to field work conducted previously in Latin America, Spain, or Portugal. Unfortunately, these faculty weren't able to participate in their planned field research due to the COVID-19 pandemic but hope to do so once it is deemed safe to travel again. In this award cycle, we supported the following projects:

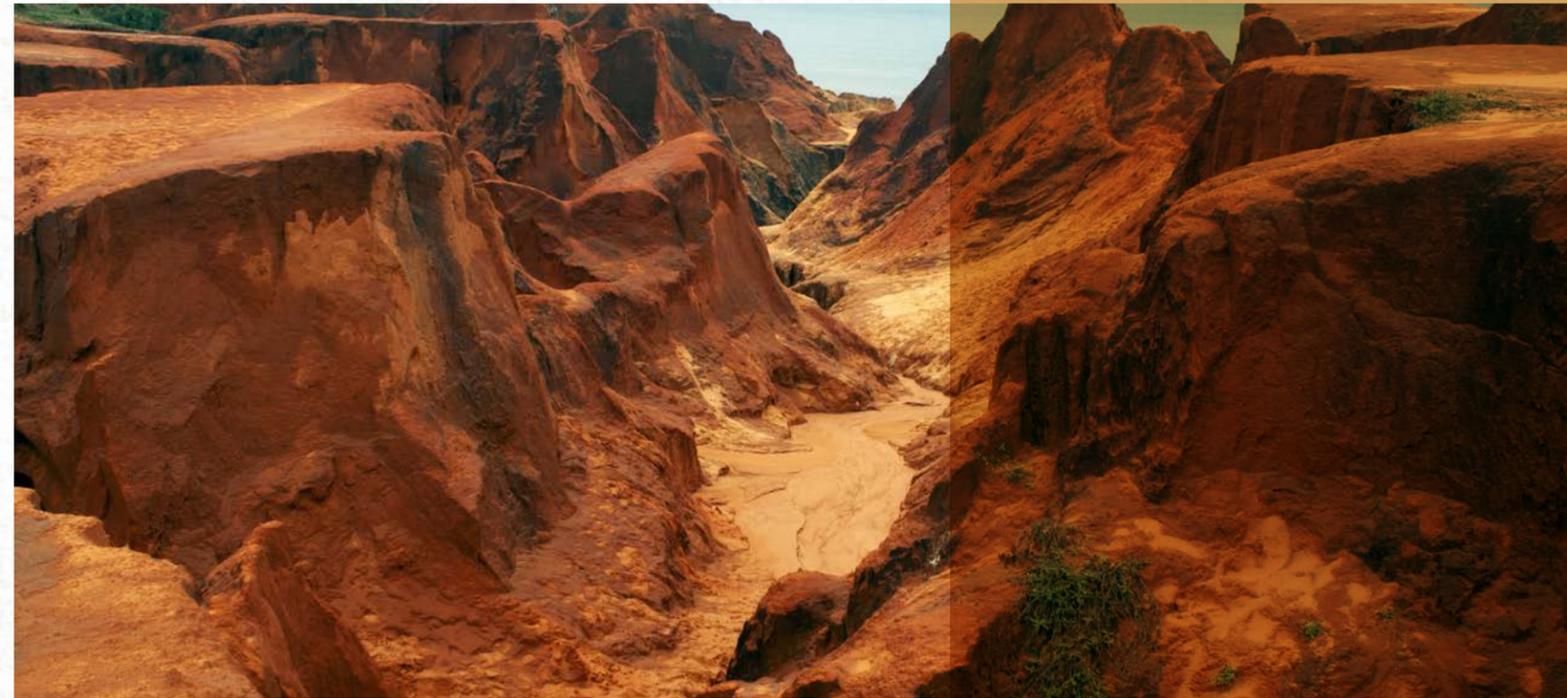
MIRIAM GAY-ANTAK

Geography & Environmental Studies | "Climate Change Lessons from Rural Women in Oaxaca, Mexico"

ROSA VALLEJOS

Linguistics | "The Linguistic Expression of Complex Events in Secoya"

Academic Lectures & Events



The LAII maintains a thriving outreach program that reaches across and beyond UNM. In addition to hosting our own events, we co-sponsor a range of programs in partnership with departments and organizations across campus. Lecture series, invited presentations, and conferences all contribute to the dynamic learning experience at UNM.

**THE LAII SPONSORED
AND CO-SPONSORED
MORE THAN 60 EVENTS,
ENGAGING OVER 7500
ATTENDEES.**

Signature Series: Im/migration and Human Rights

Cosponsored with UNM Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, the Alfonso Ortiz Center for Intercultural Studies and UNM El Centro de la Raza

BORDER SOUTH: SCREENING AND Q&A

Raúl O. Paz Pastrana and Jason De León

THE PUSHBACK SCREENING AND Q&A

Veronica Escobar and Beto O'Rourke

DISCUSSION WITH FRONTERISTXS COLLECTIVE: ONGOING COLLABORATIVE WORK IN THE ABOLITION MOVEMENT

hazel batrezchavez and Bernadine Hernández

LAS MADRES DE BERKS SCREENING AND TALKBACK

Michelle Angela Ortiz

JUSTICIA FOR THE CHILDREN

Saray Argumedo, Amalia Mondragon, Virgil Esquivel, and Gloria and Ismael Gonzalez

QUEER AND TRANS MIGRATIONS: DYNAMICS OF ILLEGALIZATION, DETENTION, AND DEPORTATION

Karma R. Chávez (The University of Texas) and Eithne Luibhéid (The University of Arizona)

FRONT OF THE HOUSE, BACK OF THE HOUSE: RACE AND INEQUALITY IN THE LIVES OF RESTAURANT WORKERS

Eli R. Wilson, (The University of New Mexico)

IDENTIFYING THE DEAD ALONG OUR SOUTHERN BORDER: IMMIGRATION, REGULATION, FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Bruce E. Anderson (Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner), Heather J.H. Edgar (The University of New Mexico), Tessa Lee (San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office), and Kate Spradley (Texas State University)

THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN LATIN AMERICA: PERSPECTIVES FROM UNHCR OFFICES ON THE FRONTLINE

Fernando Flores (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

Signature Series: Perspectivas Modernas: Latin America

Series featuring LAll-affiliated faculty with the National Hispanic Cultural Center, co-sponsored by the UNM Department of History and the Center for the Southwest

BRAZILIAN RAP AND THE GRAMMAR OF THE BLACK EXISTENCE

Paulo Dutra, Spanish & Portuguese

TRANS-AMERICAN DETRITUS: A STUDY IN TRANS-FEMICIDE

Francisco Galarte, American Studies

THE ART AND CRAFT OF OAXACAN MEZCAL

Ronda Brulotte, Geography and Environmental Studies

SEEKING REFUGE: THE ROLE OF EXPERT WITNESSES IN LATIN AMERICAN ASYLUM CASES

Kimberly Gauderman, History



K-12 Educational Outreach



We provide outreach to K-12 educators and students who work across grade levels and content areas, promoting understanding about Latin American cultures and languages.

The LAII's K-12 outreach takes the form of professional development workshops, curriculum development, and youth programming. All emphasize culturally relevant and critically-informed content. Particularly here in New Mexico, where Spanish is an official language and local history is informed by a legacy of exchange across the Americas, students benefit from culturally informed and accurate materials.

WORKSHOP SPOTLIGHT: FRIDA KAHLO, DIEGO RIVERA, AND MEXICAN MODERNISM

During the Spring of 2021, the LAII partnered with the Albuquerque Museum for a series of educator workshops on the exhibit, *Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Mexican Modernism*. Educators had the opportunity to learn about the exhibition's content and themes from Josie Lopez, curator of art at the Albuquerque Museum, and how to incorporate them into the classroom with curricula, activities, and lesson plans.

Our People



The LAII functions as a network of faculty, students, independent scholars, K-12 educators, and community members. Our programs sustain this network and benefit from it, contributing to UNM's rich environment for the study and teaching of Latin America and Iberia. These diverse affiliates regularly come together to share approaches to understanding the region.

**LAII FOSTERS A
DYNAMIC COMMUNITY OF
SCHOLARSHIP WITHIN AND
BEYOND UNM**

In Remembrance: Joanie Swanson



Joanie Swanson served as the Latin American Studies (LAS) academic advisor for 26 years from 1979 – 2005. She was a beloved staff member who contributed much to the LAS program and the overall mission of the Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAI). Joanie lived and worked in Bolivia before coming to UNM, and brought a strong commitment to supporting students in learning about Latin American cultures and languages. MALAS alumnus, Doug Hecock (1999), fondly recalls how much thought Joanie put into her work. Doug noted of his program experience, “Everyone was kind and welcoming. But Joanie was so thoughtful and helpful and warm - she made us each feel as though we were the most important people there - that our challenges and questions were the most critical of the moment. Joanie had hundreds if not thousands of advisees, and yet when I came to see her, she made me feel like I was that special one. There wasn’t a more comfortable place for me to be than in Joanie’s office.” This sentiment is widely shared by other LAS alumni.

Dr. Bill Stanley, who previously directed the LAS program and later the LAI, recalled, “Joanie helped make LAI feel like home for students and faculty alike. There is no other word for it than to say that she was beloved. LAS is a complex program to navigate, and Joanie always took the time to work with students individually to make sure they could pursue their interests, and she also paid attention to their needs as human beings. As a colleague, she was warm and funny, and had a goofy and self-deprecating sense of humor.”

Outside the office, Joanie was an avid outdoor adventurer, and traveled the world alongside her intrepid husband Gerry and their sons Scott and Kent, often visiting former students around the country and abroad. She attributed her sons’ never getting in trouble as teenagers to the fact that she and Gerry often took them on highly unpredictable outdoor and travel adventures – there was no shortage of adrenaline moments in their young lives! In the years after her retirement, Joanie could be found on her bike traveling unbelievable distances on the backroads of New Mexico, on a raft shooting rapids, or up on Cumbres pass on Nordic skis. Joanie is survived by her husband, Gerry, her sons, Kent and Scott, and grandson Emiliano Swanson-Iglesias.

In Remembrance: Vickie Madrid Nelson



Vickie Madrid Nelson started her storied career at the Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAI) in 1981, shortly after earning her bachelor’s degree in secondary bilingual education from The University of New Mexico. She began as an Administrative Assistant and retired in 2019 as Associate Director for Business Operations. During her 37-year tenure with the LAI, Vickie proved to be the backbone of the Institute, supporting it through various administrations, grants, initiatives, and opportunities. Throughout the years, Vickie offered sound counsel and kept the LAI running like a well-oiled machine. She gave the same careful attention to projects both big and small and always had time for people.

Vickie welcomed everyone – students, staff, faculty, and visitors – with such warmth and kindness that it was easy to feel like the LAI was home upon setting foot in the building. Former LAI Director, Dr. Bill Stanley, noted, “As a co-worker, she [Vickie] set an impossible-to-match standard of warmth, courtesy, attention to detail, knowledge of complex processes, and willingness to go the extra mile to help people. Vickie was always poised, chose her words carefully, and was always a step ahead in considering the implications of any decision. She had a prodigious and precise memory for institutional history, processes, and precedents, which helped ensure fairness and consistency.” With her impressive institutional knowledge and creative problem solving, there was never a situation she could not find the solution to. Vickie served as past, present, and future of the Institute, holding the vision and mission of the LAI at the center of her work.

Dr. Susan Tiano, retired LAI Director, said of Vickie, “To me, Vickie’s is the epitome of a life well lived. She balanced work and family effectively and lovingly; she operated from a strong spiritual foundation that injected morality into everything she did; and she supported generations of students and colleagues to learn about and love Latin America as much as she did. She was a treasured member of the UNM community whose rare combination of efficacy and empathy will inspire us for years to come.”

In addition to being the central pillar of the LAI, Vickie was one of many pillars in her family. Being one of eight children, she was generous with her time and focused on the importance of family, putting her family first. Vickie built her life with her husband of forty years, Eugene Nelson, creating a happy household for her three daughters – Nicole, Joselyn, and Alissa – and her five grandchildren.



Our People **Staff**



Frances Hayashida

Director

Ronda Brulotte

Associate Director for Academic Programs

Marleen Linares-Gonzalez

Communication & Outreach Specialist

Texanna Martin

Unit Administrator

Krista Savoca

Associate Director for Program Development

A big “thank you!” to the graduate and undergraduate student assistants for their contributions in 2020-21 to the LAll and our partners:

Ericka Arias

Javier Astorga

Dominic Baca

Cinthya Bolivar

Joselin Castillo

David Davilla

Moira Garcia

Felina Martinez

Jackie Munro

Miles Nowlin

Helena Omana Zapata

Alexandra Rivas

Soledad Roybal

Phillip Salazar

Laura Torres Vargas

Kelsey Varisco