



**Chicano Studies Research Center  
Graduate School of Education and  
Information Studies  
Center for Community College Partnerships**

**UCLA**

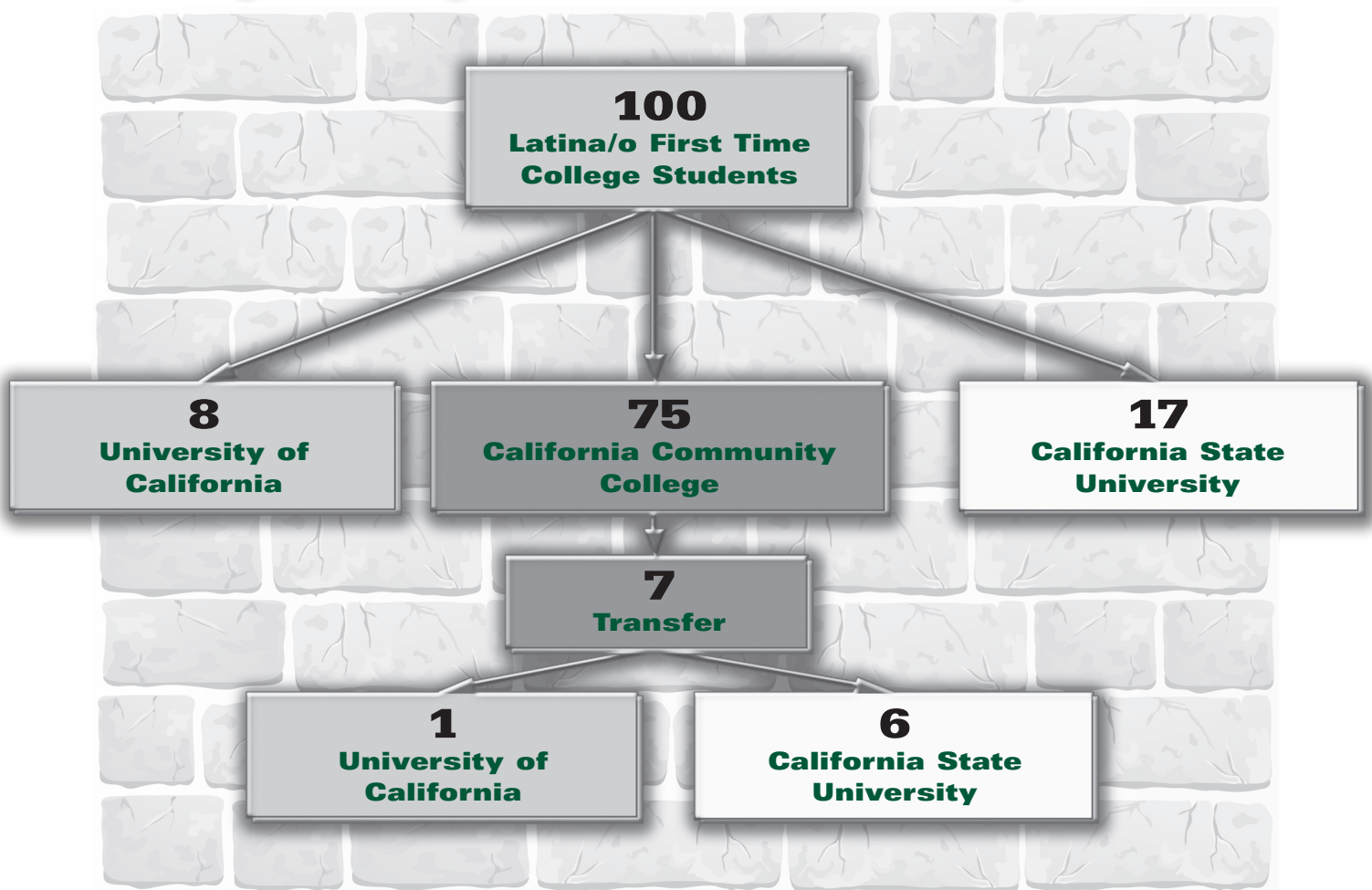
*present*

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**The 2007 Latina/o Education Summit**

# **CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**Understanding the Latina/o Transfer Experience  
Through All Segments of Postsecondary Education**



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**Friday, May 25, 2007**

**UCLA Tom Bradley International Hall**

**8:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.**



**University of California, Los Angeles**

**Chicano Studies Research Center**

**Graduate School of Education and Information Studies**

**Center for Community College Partnerships**

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**The 2007 Latina/o Education Summit**

**California Community  
College Students**

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# From the Director



On behalf of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC), the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, and the Center for Community College Partnerships, I welcome you to the Second Annual Latina/o Education Summit. By bringing together scholars, educators, community representatives, policy makers, and students, we hope to spotlight the critical factors facing Latina/o students at each segment in the education pipeline.

At our first summit on March 24, 2006, we looked at the entire education pipeline to provide a comprehensive overview of the research, and we discussed viable policies and programs for all levels of Latina/o education. The data that we reviewed made the issue clear: Latina/o students represented almost three-quarters of the enrollment of public schools in Los Angeles, yet little more than one-eighth of the entering class at UCLA. If the educational system is a “pipeline” running from kindergarten through graduate and professional programs, then a disproportionate number of Latina/o students were falling through the cracks at every segment in the pipeline. Coinciding with the conference, the CSRC released a series of studies with policy recommendations that are available online at [www.chicano.ucla.edu](http://www.chicano.ucla.edu).

The goal of the 2007 summit is to focus attention on the community college segment and the transfer process from community college to a four-year institution. An overwhelming majority of the Latina/o students who pursue higher education attend California community colleges and aspire to transfer to UC or CSU. The community college route also plays a critical role in Chicana/o doctoral production; of the total number of students receiving doctorates between 1990 and 2000, 23 percent had attended a community college (roughly twice the percentage of any other group).

I want to thank Union Bank of California, The College Board, Vice Chancellor Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, and Vice Chancellor Janina Montero for joining us in implementing the goals of the Education Summit. Their generous support not only helps make this conference possible but also enables the publication of research reports with important new data. The support from Vice Chancellors Mitchell-Kernan and Montero also allowed us to include significant numbers of graduate and undergraduate students in the Education Summit and to fulfill the training mission of the CSRC. I also extend appreciation to the Education Summit planning committee, including Professor and CSRC Associate Director Daniel Solorzano, CSRC Graduate Fellow Martha Rivas (a PhD candidate in Education), Mr. Alfred R. Herrera, Assistant Vice Provost and Director of the UCLA Center for Community College Partnerships, and Dr. Carlos Manuel Haro, Assistant Director of the CSRC and coordinator of the Education Summit series.

By focusing this summit on California’s community college system we will consider the research, resources, and relationships needed to remedy and strengthen the education pipeline for Latina/o students who desire to pursue higher education. In this way, we can join together to build a consensus, develop practical solutions, and establish an ongoing forum for realizing the goal of educational equity for all students.

**Chon Noriega**  
**Professor and CSRC Director**

# About the Conference

The 2006 Education Summit, “Critical Transitions in the Latina/o Education Pipeline” focused on the educational experiences of Latina/o students from primary to graduate school. The conference identified and discussed the factors that are crucial in order for Latina/os to successfully progress through the education pipeline. This year, the conference will focus specifically on the community college experience and the perspective of Latina/o transfer students.

Of the Latina/o students who pursue public postsecondary education in California, 60 to 65 percent begin at the community college level. Latina/os are more likely than any other racial/ethnic group to start their college careers in the community college system. When we analyze doctorate attainment rates for Chicana/os, we see that one out of four Chicana/o Ph.D. recipients first attended a community college. Therefore, the 2007 Education Summit will foster discussion regarding the importance of the transfer function from community colleges to four-year and graduate institutions.

The future of the Latina/o community and the future of California will be determined by the efforts we make to improve educational conditions for Latina/o students and, in particular, the experiences of community college students. Thus, the purpose of this conference is threefold:

1. Identify the critical institutional factors that prepare Latina/o community college students to transfer into four-year institutions and that support them as they pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees.
2. Identify critical social factors that prepare Latina/o community college students to transfer into four-year institutions and that support them as they pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees.
3. Compile research and policy recommendations from the literature on community college transfer students and offer practical solutions to educators, students, and policy makers to increase educational opportunities for Latina/o community college transfer students.

# Conference Program

**8:30 a.m.**

## **Registration**

Tom Bradley International Hall, West Gallery

**9:00 a.m.**

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Tom Bradley International Room

- Chon A. Noriega, Director, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center
- Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, Vice Chancellor for UCLA Graduate Studies
- Aimee Dorr, Dean, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies
- Daniel G. Solorzano, Professor, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, and Associate Director, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center

**9:20 a.m.**

## **Transfer Success Story**

Terri Gomez, Assistant Professor, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

**9:30 a.m.**

## **The Role of Community Colleges: *Institutional Factors***

- Moderator: Rosa Pérez, Chancellor, San Jose/Evergreen Community College District
- Armida Ornelas, Professor, East Los Angeles College
- Alfred R. Herrera, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Partnerships, and Director, UCLA Center for Community College Partnerships
- Ana Lopez, current transfer student, UCLA

Although Latina/o students compose a large proportion of the community college student population, they have low transfer rates into four-year institutions. This panel will address the institutional factors that positively (or negatively) influence student success at the community college level and that encourage transfer opportunities into four-year institutions. Dr. Pérez will discuss how community colleges can ensure student preparation and support students' aspirations to transfer to four-year institutions. Dr. Ornelas will present her research on "transfer culture," focusing on specific factors that should be implemented at community colleges to increase the number of Latina/o transfer students. Mr. Herrera will discuss his work on effective ways to prepare students both before and while they attend community college and the importance of alliances between community colleges and four-year institutions that are designed to serve the needs of prospective transfer students. Ms. Lopez will share her experiences regarding the institutional factors that shaped her experiences as an aspiring transfer student.

10:45 a.m. — *Break*

**10:55 a.m.**

## **The Role of Community College Students: *Social Capital***

- Moderator: Stephen J. Handel, National Director for Community College Initiatives, The College Board
- Jennifer E. Jovel, doctoral candidate, Stanford University
- Francisco Bravo, current transfer student, California State University, Long Beach
- Patricia Avila, Counselor, Riverside Community College

Panelists will discuss their research and personal experiences regarding various social factors that may assist community college students as they plan to transfer to four-year institutions. Dr. Handel will discuss social capital among transfer students. Ms. Jovel will present critical findings from her dissertation, "Community College Transfer: The Role of Social Capital in the Transfer Process of Chicana Students." Mr. Bravo will speak about his experiences as a transfer student. Ms. Avila will share her perspective on how students navigate the transfer function despite institutional barriers.

**12:15 p.m.**

**Lunch**

Tom Bradley International Hall

**Action Plan: Questions and Policy Recommendations**

Moderator: Alfred R. Herrera, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Partnerships, and Director, UCLA Center for Community College Partnerships

**1:30 p.m.**

**Community College Transfer Students: *Experiences at Four-Year and Graduate Institutions***

- Moderator: Santiago Bernal, Assistant Director, UCLA Center for Community College Partnerships
- Frankie Santos Laanan, Associate Professor, Iowa State University
- Martha A. Rivas, doctoral candidate, UCLA
- Crystal R. Alvarez, transfer and doctoral student, UCLA

This panel will examine the factors that positively engage transfer students and support their success at four-year institutions. Mr. Bernal will discuss his experience in preparing community college students for transition to the university. Dr. Laanan will present his research on “transfer shock” and discuss strategies that assist Latina/o students’ transition to four-year institutions. Ms. Rivas will present current findings on Ph.D. recipients who attended a community college on route to their degree and discuss the preparation of transfer students for graduate school. Ms. Alvarez will share her experiences as a community college transfer student who is now in a doctoral degree program.

2:45 p.m. — Break

**2:55 p.m.**

**Narrowing our Focus: *The Transfer Experience through an AB540 Perspective***

- Moderator: Irma Archuleta, Instructor, California State University Long Beach, and Co-Founder, Leticia A. Network for Immigrant Access to California Higher Education
- María Lucia “Malou” Chavez, transfer student and UCLA alumna
- A current AB540 community college student
- Dennis Lopez, Co-Founder, Leticia A. Network for Immigrant Access to California Higher Education

This panel will explore the transfer experience for undocumented students. Ms. Archuleta will discuss her experiences working with undocumented students. A current community college student will share his or her experience as a current AB540-eligible student. Ms. Chavez will share her experience as an AB540-eligible transfer student, a founding member of IDEAS at UCLA, and a prospective law student. Mr. Lopez will present some of his work on undocumented students and the critical institutional factors that need to be in place to help undocumented students attain their educational goals.

3:55 p.m. — Break

**4:00 p.m.**

**Research on Latina/o Community College Students: *Where Do We Go from Here?***

- Moderator: Daniel G. Solorzano, Professor, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, and Associate Director, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center
- Armida Ornelas, Associate Professor, East Los Angeles College
- Stephen J. Handel, National Director for Community College Initiatives, The College Board
- Santiago Bernal, Assistant Director, UCLA Center for Community College Partnerships
- Irma Archuleta, Instructor, California State University, Long Beach, and Co-Founder, Leticia A. Network for Immigrant Access to California Higher Education

Each of the panelists will provide an overview of the Latina/o Community College Education Summit and guide a discussion of directions for future research and policy recommendations.

**5:00 p.m.**

**Reception**

Tom Bradley International Hall, East Gallery

# Panelist and Moderator Biographies

## **Crystal R. Alvarez**

*Doctoral Student, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies  
University of California, Los Angeles*

Ms. Alvarez was raised in Riverside, California, and is the younger of two daughters born to parents from El Paso, Texas. She graduated from Alvord Continuation High School and began her postsecondary education at Riverside Community College. Ms. Alvarez transferred to UCLA, where she earned a B.A. in Chicana/o Studies and an M.A. in Education. Currently, she is a UCLA doctoral student in Social Science and Comparative Education with an emphasis in Race and Ethnic Studies.

## **Irma Archuleta**

*Lecturer  
Chicano/Latino Studies, California State University, Long Beach  
Behavioral and Social Sciences, El Camino College*

Ms. Archuleta was born in Mesilla, New Mexico. She was raised in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, until the age of ten, when her parents relocated to California. Her mother, a U.S. citizen, was born in Mesilla, New Mexico, and her father was born in Fresnillo, Zacatecas, Mexico. She attended Compton College, then transferred to California State University, Dominguez Hills, where she completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees. She has a B.A. in Human Studies and an M.A. in Public Administration. She currently teaches Bilingual Communications at CSULB and Political Science at El Camino College.

## **Patricia Avila**

*Assistant Professor  
Counseling  
Riverside City College*

Ms. Avila was born in Argentina and raised in the San Gabriel Valley. She is the oldest of three children born to immigrants from Mendoza, Argentina. After graduating from Whittier High School she attended the University of California, Los Angeles, and earned her B.A. in Spanish Literature. She has an M.A. in Education Counseling from California State University, Dominguez Hills, and is the first person in her family to graduate from college. She is currently an Assistant Professor in Counseling and serves as the Director of the Puente Program for the Riverside Community College District. She has been married for thirteen years and has three children.

## **Santiago Bernal**

*Assistant Director  
Center for Community College Partnerships  
University of California, Los Angeles*

Santiago Bernal serves on numerous community college advisory boards. He is a co-founder of the UCLA Student Transfer and Opportunities Mentoring Program and has worked extensively with community college students since 1994. He was born in El Salvador and immigrated to the United States in 1980 with his family. He completed his undergraduate studies at UCLA, where he received a B.A. in English with a concentration in World Literature. Mr. Bernal is currently working on his M.A. in Education Leadership and Policy Studies at California State University, Northridge.

## **Francisco Bravo**

*Undergraduate Student, Sociology  
California State University, Long Beach*

Francisco Bravo was born in Puebla, Mexico, and raised in Tustin, California. He is the second of four children born to Mexican immigrants from Puebla, Mexico. He attended Santa Ana College and later transferred to California State University, Long Beach. He is currently attending CSULB, where he is studying Sociology. Mr. Bravo will be the first in his family to earn a college degree.

## **María Lucía (Malou) Chavez**

*Community Advocate  
Community College Transfer Student  
and Graduate of University of California, Los Angeles*

María Lucía (Malou) Chavez, a first-generation college graduate and an AB540-eligible transfer student, earned her B.A. in Political Science from UCLA. As a community advocate, she works to increase access to higher education for all underrepresented students, especially undocumented students. She is a co-founder of Improving Dreams, Equality Access, and Success (IDEAS), a student support group for AB 540-eligible students at UCLA, many of whom are undocumented. Ms. Chavez has developed *The College and Financial Aid Guide for AB540 Undocumented Immigrant Students* as part of a statewide coalition of community advocates. In August 2006 she was recognized by the Spanish language daily *La Opinión* as one of the *Lideres del Futuro* (future leaders) for her service to the Los Angeles Latino and immigrant communities. Ms. Chavez will enter law school in 2008. Her goal is to become a public interest lawyer and provide legal services to marginalized communities.



**Terri Gomez**

Assistant Professor  
Ethnic and Women's Studies  
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Dr. Gomez was born and raised in Colton, California. She is the youngest of six children born to Mexican immigrants from Jalisco, Mexico. She attended San Bernardino Valley College and later transferred to UCLA, where she earned her B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. in Political Science. Dr. Gomez is the first Latina to receive a Ph.D. in Political Science at UCLA. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Ethnic and Women's Studies Department at Cal Poly Pomona.

**Stephen J. Handel**

National Director for Community College Initiatives  
The College Board

In his capacity as National Director for Community College Initiatives, Dr. Handel leads the College Board's efforts to develop policies and programs that serve community colleges while advancing equity, access, and college success for all students. Prior to this position Dr. Handel was a member of the president's staff for the ten-campus University of California system, serving as the Director of Transfer Enrollment and Undergraduate Outreach. In addition, Dr. Handel has held posts in admissions and student affairs at UCLA and California State University, Sacramento. Dr. Handel earned his A.A. from Cosumnes River College, his B.A. from CSUS, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from UCLA.

**Alfred R. Herrera**

Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Partnerships  
and Director of the Center for Community College Partnerships  
University of California, Los Angeles

Mr. Herrera is responsible for developing collaborative partnerships between UCLA and community colleges and for developing and implementing summer academic residential programs to assist students in their academic development. Previously he was the Coordinator of Community College Transfer Programs in the UCLA office for Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools for eighteen years. In April 2003 he received special mention in the *United States Congressional Record* by Congresswoman Hilda Solis for his work in promoting access, social justice, and opportunity in higher education, particularly for transfer students, and for his work on the passage of AB540. Mr. Herrera earned his M.P.A. from California State University, Dominguez Hills, and his B.A. in Behavioral Science from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

**Jennifer E. Jovel**

Doctoral Candidate, Education  
Stanford University

Ms. Jovel is a Salvadoreña, born and raised in the San Francisco Bay area. She began her college career at Ohlone College, where she was first exposed to the possibility of pursuing a college education. She transferred to the University of California, Berkeley, and earned a B.A. in Social Welfare, becoming the first person in her family to receive a college degree. She then earned an M.A. in Educational Counseling from San Jose State University and an M.A. in Sociology from Stanford University. Currently, she is a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Education at Stanford University. Her research focus is on social capital among Chicana and Chicano community college students.

**Frankie Santos Laanan**

Associate Professor and Program Coordinator, Higher Education  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
Iowa State University

Frankie Santos Laanan was born and raised on the island of Guam. A beneficiary of the American community college system, he began his postsecondary education at three community colleges—Northern Virginia Community College, Los Angeles City College, and Los Angeles Valley College—before transferring to UCLA in 1991. Currently, he is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Iowa State University. His research focuses on college access, minority students' pathway to the baccalaureate and beyond, and the impact of community colleges on individuals and society. He received his B.A. in Political Science and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Higher Education and Organizational Change from UCLA. His current research projects, which are funded by the National Science Foundation, focus on the role of community colleges in serving as a pathway to a baccalaureate degree for women and minorities and the education and training of the twenty-first-century technician.

**Ana Luisa Lopez**

Peer Advisor, Consortium (LATTC & ELAC)  
Center for Community College Partnerships  
University of California, Los Angeles

Ms. Lopez was born and raised in Sinaloa, Mexico. She is the youngest of four children. After completing high school in Mexico, she came to the United States in May 2000. She began an ESL curriculum and took all the general education requirements at East Los Angeles College before she transferred to UCLA as an applied mathematics major.

She will graduate in June 2007 with a B.S. and will be the first person in her family to receive a college degree. Ms. Lopez plans to teach pre-algebra at the Jaime Escalante Program for Junior High and High School Students at ELAC. In addition, she will pursue an M.A. at California State University, Long Beach, followed by a Ph.D. in Engineering and Industrial Applied Mathematics through a joint program offered by CSULB and Claremont University.

### **Dennis Lopez**

*Director, EOPS/CARE*

*Mt. San Jacinto College*

*Co-Founder, Leticia A. Network for Immigrant Access to California Higher Education*

Mr. Lopez is the product of a barrio environment in Southeast San Diego. He received a B.A. in Comparative Cultures from the University of California, Irvine, and an M.Ed. from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. Mr. Lopez has taught education and Chicano/Latino studies courses at California State University, Long Beach, Cal Poly Pomona, Lehman College (CUNY), and Pepperdine University (Irvine Center). Mr. Lopez has worked in educational equity programs for thirty years; among these programs are EOP/SAA, the Puente Project, MESA, and GEAR UP. He currently serves as director of the EOPS/CARE program at Mt. San Jacinto Community College.

### **Armida Ornelas**

*Associate Professor*

*East Los Angeles College*

Dr. Ornelas is an Associate Professor of Political Science in the Department of Social Science at East Los Angeles College. Professor Ornelas's research and teaching focus on the transfer process for Latina/o community college students, transfer culture, educational outcome and conditions for Chicana/o and Latina/o students, critical race theory, and institutional case study analysis. She has published several articles on these issues and is currently working on a chapter for "An Equal Opportunity Analysis of Advance Placement Courses and University Admissions: A Case of Educational Identity." Dr. Ornelas currently serves as Vice Chair of History/Social Science for the Subject Matter Committee of the California State Board of Education.

### **Rosa G. Pérez**

*Chancellor*

*San Jose-Evergreen Community College District*

A passionate, energetic educator and leader, Chancellor Pérez has earned a reputation as an innovator in post-secondary education at the community college level. She works with two campuses, San Jose City College and Evergreen Valley College, to create strong institutions that respect the value of every student and employee. Her everyday actions express a deep commitment to social justice and a grassroots approach to the work of education and community building partnerships. An enthusiastic advocate and spokesperson for immigrant rights and access to higher education for low-income students, Chancellor Pérez developed her insights as the first person in her immigrant family to graduate from high school and go to college. Chancellor Pérez was named as one of the Bay Area's Outstanding Hispanics by KGO-TV, and she has discussed issues of higher education, multiculturalism, equal opportunity and student rights in numerous television news appearances.

### **Martha A. Rivas**

*Doctoral Candidate, Education and Information Studies*

*University of California, Los Angeles*

Ms. Rivas was born in Zamora, Michoacán, Mexico, and raised in Indio, California. The middle child of three raised by working class parents, she is a first-generation UCLA college student, obtaining a B.A. in Comparative Literature and Chicana/o Studies with a minor in Education in 2002 and an M.A. in Race and Ethnic Studies in Education in 2003. She is currently a doctoral candidate in the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. Her research interests include using critical race theory and Chicana feminist epistemologies to document the experiences of Chicana/o students in postsecondary education generally, and community college transfer students specifically. Her dissertation study is titled "Navegando Contra La Corriente: Understanding the Chicana Transfer Experience from Community College to the Doctorate."

### **Daniel G. Solorzano**

*Associate Professor*

*Graduate School of Education and Information Studies*

*Associate Director, Chicano Studies Research Center*

*University of California, Los Angeles*

Dr. Solorzano is a Professor of Social Science and Comparative Education. He specializes in the role of race, gender, and class in educational access and attainment. He is also the Associate Director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center and the Associate Director of the University of California All Campus Consortium on Research and Diversity (UC ACCORD). Dr. Solorzano's current work applies critical race theory to examine the college admissions process and access to Advanced Placement courses for Chicana/o, Latina/o and African American high school students. Dr. Solorzano has written extensively on educational access, equity, persistence, and graduation of students of color in all segments of the education pipeline. His scholarly publications include numerous journal articles and books. Two of his published works are "Critical Race Theory, Marginality, and the Experience of Minority Students in Higher Education" (with Octavio Villalpando) and "Critical Race Theory, Racial and Gender Microaggressions, and the Experiences of Chicana and Chicano Scholars."

# Research Note: California's Latina/o Community College Transfer Students

Martha A. Rivas, Jeanette Pérez, Crystal R. Alvarez, and Daniel G. Solorzano

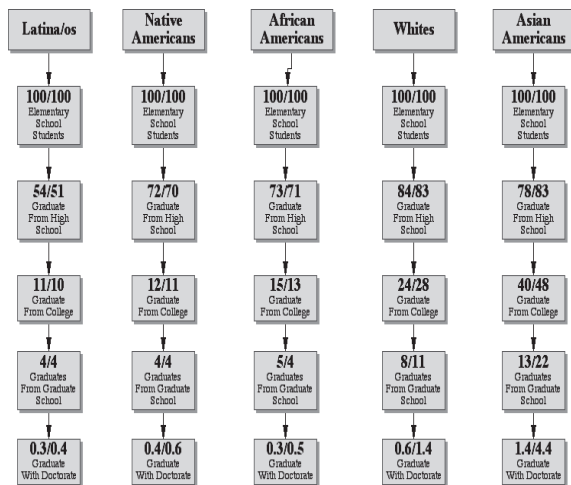
Latina/os continue to be one of the fastest growing racial/ethnic minority groups in the United States (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000).<sup>1</sup> In California, Latina/o students currently represent almost half of the entire K-12 student population, and state projections estimate that by the year 2012, Latina/os will be the majority of the students in California schools (Gándara et al. 1998). Despite these population trends, Latina/o students continue to be relegated to overcrowded, underresourced schools. They experience higher than average dropout rates from high school and are too often tracked into vocational curricula that limit their

exposure to college-bound resources (Gándara et al. 1998; Oakes 1985; Pérez-Huber et al. 2006; Solorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera 2005). Recent findings also indicate that the matriculation rate of Latina/o students into higher education continues to be low compared to the Latina/o population overall and other racial/ethnic communities. Figure 1 illustrates the educational attainment by race/ethnicity and gender for five major racial/ethnic groups in the United States. Out of every 100 Latina elementary school students, 54 will eventually graduate from high school, 11 will graduate from college, 4 will obtain a graduate or professional degree, and less than 1 will receive a doctorate. Given that Latina/o students continue to be severely underrepresented in postsecondary education in comparison to other racial groups, it is evident that the educational system is failing to support this population (Fry 2002; Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Solorzano, Rivas, and Velez 2005). Knowing where many Latina/o students are *pushed out* of the educational system, however, does not provide the information needed to increase the number of Latina/o students who receive baccalaureate and graduate degrees. To do this we must understand the critical role of the community college segment of the education pipeline.

Figure 2 illustrates the community college pathway, which is where the majority of Latina/o students begin their postsecondary education (Fry 2002; Ornelas 2002; Ornelas and Solorzano 2004; Pérez Huber et al. 2006; Solorzano, Rivas, and Velez 2005). For example, of every 100 first-time Latina/o college students in California, 75 begin at the community college. Of these students, around seven will transfer to a four-year institution. Nearly all transfer to CSU rather than UC. Although a great proportion of Latina/o students who enter community college aspire to transfer to a four-year institution, their transfer rates reveal that they face *transfer institutional neglect* as they navigate postsecondary institutions (Rivas, forthcoming).<sup>2</sup> The ongoing mismatch between students' aspirations to transfer and the institutional support needed to meet this goal must be examined and modified accordingly (Yosso and Solorzano 2006).

The community college pathway clearly plays a critical role in doctoral production for students throughout the United States. When the Latina/o population is disaggregated into its constituent subgroups, the data show that although 14 percent of all Latina/o doctoral recipients attended a community college on their way to their doctorate, 23 percent of all Chicana/os navigated this pathway (National Opinion Research Center 1990–2000).<sup>3</sup> Thus, Chicana/os are

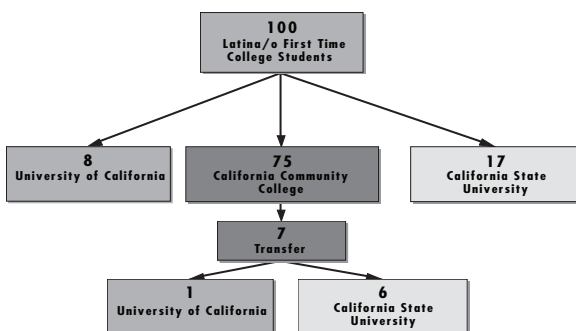
**Figure 1. Latina/o students experience the least effective educational preparation and lowest transition rates at each stage of the pipeline in comparison to other racial/ethnic groups.**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2002.

Note: First number in each box indicates females; second number indicates males.

**Figure 2. Although the majority of Latina/o first time college students attend the California Community College system with high aspirations to transfer, only a small percentage gain access to a four-year institution.**



Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission 2004.

more likely than any other racial/ethnic group to reach the doctorate by way of the community college (Solorzano, Rivas, and Velez 2005). These data suggest that the transfer function should be a pivotal factor in efforts to enlarge the pool of graduate and professional students.<sup>4</sup> The future of Latina/o students and the future of California will be determined by the efforts made to improve educational opportunities for all students, but especially those in the community college system.

The purpose of the 2007 Latina/o Education Summit Conference is to identify factors that are critical if educators and policy makers are to successfully prepare community college students to make the transition from community college to four-year institutions and, eventually, graduate school. Additionally, our goal is to compile policy and research recommendations from the literature, scholars, student panelists, and community members that offer practical solutions to educators, policy makers, and students.

By focusing this conference on California's postsecondary educational system we can share, create, and build on the research, resources, and relationships needed to strengthen the education pipeline for Latina/o community college students. Our report, *Latina/o Transfer Students: Understanding the Critical Role of California's Community Colleges in Postsecondary Education* (CSRC Research Report no. 9), examines the research literature on the experiences of Latina/o students while they attend community college and move through the transfer process. It also considers the degree attainment rates of Latina/o students at four-year institutions and graduate schools. The report concludes with research and policy recommendations that, if implemented, will increase the number of Latina/o community college transfer students who graduate with advanced degrees.

## Notes

1. *Latina/o* refers to non-homogenous persons of Latin American descent or origin, residing in the United States irrespective of generation or immigration status. It should be mentioned that while most studies use *Latina/o* as a homogenous category, there are differences among and within various Latina/o subgroups.
2. *Transfer institutional neglect* is defined as the neglect not only by community colleges to provide a transfer culture that ensures transfer readiness but also by four-year institutions to provide outreach, recruitment, enrollment, and retention for transfer students after they arrive at a four-year institution (Rivas, forthcoming).
3. *Chicana/o* refers to persons of Mexican descent or origin, residing in the United States irrespective of generation and immigration status. Note that the *Chicana/o* has social, historical, and political dimensions that are not addressed in this report.
4. Nationally Latinas/os are at least 13 percent of the entire U.S. population. However, Chicana/os comprise an estimated 58 percent of the Latina/o population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000). In California, Chicana/os make up approximately 80 percent of the Latina/o population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000). Further, within California public schools, Chicana/os represent a majority of all Latina/o K-12 students (Gándara et al. 1998).

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## Authors

**Martha A. Rivas** is a doctoral candidate in the UCLA Department of Education in the Division of Social Science and Comparative Education, specializing in Race and Ethnic Studies. Martha is also a research associate with the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center through her predoctoral fellowship from UCLA's Institute of American Cultures.

**Jeanette Pérez** is a community college transfer student, currently a doctoral student in the UCLA Department of Education in the Division of Social Science and Comparative Education, specializing in Race and Ethnic Studies.

**Crystal R. Alvarez** is a community college transfer student, currently a doctoral student in the UCLA Department of Education in the Division of Social Science and Comparative Education, specializing in Race and Ethnic Studies.

**Daniel G. Solorzano** is a Professor of Social Science and Comparative Education at the UCLA Graduate School of Education. He specializes in the role of race, gender, and class in educational access and attainment. He is also the Associate Director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center and the Associate Director of the University of California All Campus Consortium on Research and Diversity (UC ACCORD).

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# About the Center

The UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC) was founded in 1969 with a commitment to foster multidisciplinary research efforts as part of the land grant mission of the University of California. That mission states that University of California research needs to be in the service of the state and that it must maintain a presence in the local community.

The CSRC serves the entire campus and supports faculty and students in the social sciences, life sciences, humanities, and the professional schools. Since its establishment, the CSRC has achieved international recognition for its leadership role in scholarly research on the growing Chicano and Latino population, which now constitutes nearly one-third of the population of California and one-half that of Los Angeles, but continues to have disproportionately low access to higher education. Given its campus- and community-wide mandate, the CSRC reports directly to the Office of the Chancellor at UCLA. The CSRC also forms part of the Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR), a consortium of Latino research centers located at eighteen institutions in the United States.

The Center houses a library and special collections archive, an academic press, research projects, community-based partnerships, competitive grant and fellowship programs, and the Los Tigres del Norte Fund. Current research areas include demographics, labor, education, public health, and arts and culture. In addition to the Latina/o Education Summit, the Center has published several policy briefs on educational issues. These can be downloaded at <http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/briefs/archive.html>.

Director Chon A. Noriega is Professor in the UCLA Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media. He is author of *Shot in America: Television, the State, and the Rise of Chicano Cinema* (Minnesota, 2000) and editor of nine books dealing with Latino media, performance, and visual art. Since 1996, he has been editor of *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, the flagship journal for the field since its founding in 1970. He became CSRC Director in July 2002.

Assistant Director Carlos Manuel Haro oversees CSRC research activities, including a research grants program, a postdoctoral and graduate fellowship program, and faculty development and visiting scholar program. In addition, he undertakes and directs specific education research projects and scholarly conferences at CSRC, including the Latina/o Education Summit. Other conferences he has coordinated include: *Mendez v. Westminster School District: Paving the Path for School Desegregation and the Brown Decision* (2004), *The Sleepy Lagoon Case, Constitutional Rights, and the Struggle for Democracy* (2005), and *Sal Castro and the Chicano Youth Leadership Conference: The Development of Chicano Leadership Since 1963* (2006). Dr. Haro has published on school admissions, the Bakke decision, and school desegregation.





**UCLA CHICANO STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER**

**193 Haines Hall**

**Los Angeles, CA 90095-1544**

**Phone: 310-825-2642**

**Fax: 310-206-1784**

**E-Mail: [press@chicano.ucla.edu](mailto:press@chicano.ucla.edu)**

**[www.chicano.ucla.edu](http://www.chicano.ucla.edu)**