

December 30, 2008

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

We are delighted to announce that our new B.A. program in Chicana/o Studies is up and running at California State University Channel Islands! This letter serves as a “Save the Date” notice for an event February 2, 2009 at Hueneme High School in Oxnard, California. On this day we will be celebrating the debut of our Chicana/o Studies program and introducing our new faculty member/coordinator for Chicana/o Studies, José Alamillo. We are honored to have Hueneme High School host us, as the student body represents exactly who we are here to serve.

We are grateful to all community members who have served on committees, attended events, given input on curriculum and program design, and contributed to the development of our innovative program. We are very proud to offer our students a program that builds on the past and also looks to the future. In case our program is new to you, let us take this opportunity to introduce our curriculum, and hopefully it will whet your appetite to join us for the celebration.

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Chicana/o Studies asks students to examine current and past experiences of Chicanas/os and other hemispheric Latino/a Americans whose origins exist south of the United States/Mexico border. This degree places students at the center in the investigation of local issues in context with transborder questions through interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives. The core courses at the lower and upper division level provide majors with a solid training in Chicana/o Studies while providing them the opportunity to major, minor or double major with other disciplines in the sciences or social sciences.

As with other degree programs at CSUCI, the Chicana/o Studies major prepares students for careers in the private sector, education, government agencies, and non-profit organizations, especially those that serve communities with a significant population of people with origins from Mexico and other nations of Latin America. The minor offers students the opportunity to investigate historical and contemporary experiences of Chicana/os within a transborder perspective which will enhance their application of whatever disciplinary expertise acquired through their major degree. Both the major and the minor call for students to work with community partners through service learning and internship projects.

The new Chicana/o Studies program will prepare students for endless opportunities. The program also fits within the University’s multicultural mission. Research shows that traditionally underrepresented students are more likely to finish college when they attend a college or university that respects and works to educate others about their history and cultural background, whether or not those students actually ever take part in an ethnic studies program. This bodes well for all CSUCI Chicana/o and Latina/o students on the path to careers as scientists, mathematicians, doctors, lawyers, or whatever career they pursue.

One University Drive, Camarillo, California 93012-8599 • Tel: (805) 437-8967 • Fax: (805) 437-8864 • [www.csuci.edu](http://www.csuci.edu)

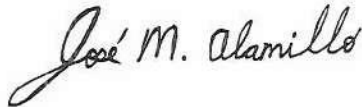
Our program continues the traditional focus of Chicana/o Studies on social justice issues combined with pre-professional skills that will equip students to succeed in government, business, civic and health related fields. This fall semester, Chicana/o Studies students, along with Spanish majors, have been continuing our collaboration with the Smithsonian National History Museum's Bracero Project, collecting and translating oral histories with residents of Ventura County who took part in some aspect of the Bracero program. Other students took courses in History of Business and Economics in North America, History of Mexico, Chicana/o History and Culture, Southern California Chicana/o Art, and Intermediate Spanish. In the spring, the courses include: Transborder Perspectives, Chicana/o Hispanic American Literature, and History of Colonial Latin America. For the next academic year, we are adding new courses: Health Issues in the Latino Community, cross-listed with Nursing; Latino/a Identities, cross-listed with Psychology; and Contemporary Immigration Issues, cross-listed with Sociology. We encourage Chicana/o Studies students to undertake a study abroad experience in Mexico, Latin America, or the Caribbean. We have plans to develop new innovative courses to offer more curriculum options to students.

Again, we want to thank you for your support and ask you to please mark your calendar for February 2, 6-8 PM. A postcard invitation will follow in a few weeks. We look forward to you joining us for an evening of conversation, music, and light refreshments.

Sincerely,



Marie Francois  
Chair, Chicana/o Studies and History  
Associate Professor of History



José Alamillo  
Coordinator, Chicana/o Studies  
Associate Professor of Chicana/o Studies