CENTER NEWS

Curricular Updates

This spring, CLLAS received approvals for revisions to the Latino and Latin American Studies minor and a new Graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies. Both are part of an overall revamping of LATS curricular offerings as we work to grow the number of minors and graduate students engaged in the program.

Eight students graduated in May with a minor in Latino and Latin American Studies. In her first semester as Program/Student Advisor, Dr. Karla Vilchez Neal recruited 17 new minors, and we have new recruitment efforts in the works! Help us by encouraging your undergraduate students to consider a minor, and don't forget about your graduate students. A graduate certificate in Latin American Studies can help graduate students demonstrate their expertise in the history, literature, and culture of the region.

Funding Summary

A portion of the CLLAS budget is dedicated to supporting the research and programming initiatives of our faculty associates and graduate students. In fiscal year 2019, CLLAS awarded just over $3,000 to faculty associates to support conference and research travel to Bolivia, Brazil, and Guatemala as well as to various cities across the United States. Graduate student funding totaled $900. We also supported various programs organized by our faculty associates, from book receptions to the Latin Jazz Party, totaling $1,100. CLLAS looks forward to continuing to support the scholarship and creativity of our faculty associates and graduate students!
NIU Latinx Oral History Project Update

Begun in 2014, the NIU Latinx Oral History Project is an undergraduate and graduate student research initiative that now features nearly 140 oral history interviews, documenting the lives and experiences of Latinxs in the Midwest. The collection’s strengths are in the stories of undocumented migrants, community activists and leaders, and NIU faculty, students, and staff. During the 2018-2019 academic year, CLLAS graduate assistants Matt Maletz (History, Ph.D. candidate) and Elisa Flores (Rehabilitation Counseling, M.A. student), along with several undergraduate students, worked to produce transcripts for all but six of the interviews in the collection.

In collaboration with NIU Libraries, and with the support of a $14,000 RIPs Grant, CLLAS has developed a pilot website for the project (https://digital.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/latino%3Aoralhistory) featuring video and audio interviews and transcripts. We hope to expand this collection in collaboration with the Center for Latino Research at DePaul University and the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame. On May 9, faculty and library staff from NIU, DePaul, and Notre Dame met with Dr. Maggie Rivas-Rodríguez, founder and director of the Voces Oral History Project at the University of Texas at Austin, to discuss plans to develop a Latinxs in the Midwest Oral History Digital Project and work together to secure external grant funding in support of these efforts.

Two LATS minors, Sheila Martínez (BUSI) and Dulce Hernández (SOCl), will be working on the Latinx Oral History Project through the 2019-2020 academic year, supported by a READ Grant. We hope to produce short documentary style videos using interviews from our collection.
CLLAS Fall 2019 Events

Here is a sneak peek at the CLLAS Fall 2019 calendar of events. Save the date and join us!

CLLAS Welcome Reception
Tue - 08/27 - 5 PM
Latino Center, Atrium

Latinx Community Art
Thu - 10/31 - 12:00 PM
Latino Center, Student Lounge

Academic Diversity Centers
Open House
Thu- 08/29 - 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM
College View Court

Cor Cantiamo
Sun - 11/3 - TBD
The premiere of a commissioned work that will feature social justice themes drawn from the Latinx Oral History Project.

Invited Lecture
"From Deportation to Prison"
Patrisia Macías-Rojas, Ph.D.
Wed - 09/18 - 5 PM
Latino Center, Room 121

"Latin Hip Hop as the New Poetry"
Catalina Maria Johnson, P.h.D.
Part of the Illinois Humanities Road Scholar Speakers Bureau Program.
Wed - 11/6 - 5 PM
Latino Center, Room 121

Invited Lecture
"Venezuela’s Crisis: Taking Stock"
Alejandro Velasco, Ph.D.
Wed - 10/2 - 5 PM
Latino Center, Room 121

Treinta y Tres Mini Conference:
"Language, Literature, and Literacy"
Fri - 11/15 - 10 AM to 12 PM
Latino Center, Room 121

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Francisco Solares-Larrave, from the Department of World Languages and Cultures, was awarded an opportunity to attend an NEH Summer Institute on José Martí and the Cuban immigrant colony in Ybor City, Florida. The Summer Institute will take place at the University of Tampa between June 17 and July 13, 2019. Dr. Solares-Larrave is among the 30 participants who received the award from a nation-wide competition.

Earlier this month, Dr. Solares-Larrave presented a paper titled "La patria del costumbrista: José Milla y Vidaurre, crítico de la modernidad" at the International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association in Boston.