

Department of Latina/Latino Studies

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES



Department of LATINA/LATINO STUDIES



Gilberto Rosas

Welcome to a new academic year!

I am delighted to serve the department, and collaborate with its faculty, staff, students, and the Latinx and allied communities, as the incoming Interim Chair of the Department. I am excited to work with each of you as we navigate the challenges before us.

I have been with the department for some 17 years, first as postdoc and then as a faculty member, where also hold a position in the Department of Anthropology, and affiliations with the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory and the Institute for Genomic Biology. I contributed in our unit's development from a program into a department, under different leaders, such as Arlene Torres, Isabel Molina, and Jonathan Inda, as well as other key unit architects, such as Alejandro Lugo, Mireya Loza, Sandra Ruiz, and Edna Viruell-Fuentes, as well as many others. I have also observed the dynamics of other Latino Studies and Ethnic Studies units during my fellowships at Northwestern University and at the University of Chicago, as I was working on my first book and related publications.

These experiences have made it clear to me that as one of the oldest and leading Latina/o Studies units in the United States, UIUC LLS should be instrumental in world-making. We should nourish in our everyday lives and relations the kind of future our students and community allies dream of, a kind of future free of interlocking oppressions, a kind of world that Latina/o Studies as an interdisciplinary field researches, teaches, and inspires.

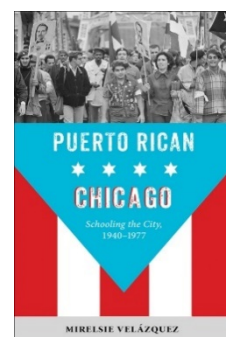
NEW FACULTY

LLS is pleased to announce the hire of the outstanding scholar and educator Mirelsie Velazquez. She will be joining our faculty as an Associate Professor in LLS in the spring. Her legacy is notable: Professor Velazquez has a doctorate and master's in Education Policy Studies from UIUC. She was a regular presence in our unit during her graduate studies.

Professor Velazquez comes to us fresh off the publication of her recent book [*Puerto Rican Chicago: Schooling the City, 1940-1977*](#) with the University of Illinois Press. We look forward to collaborating with her.



Mirelsie Velazquez





Natalie Lira

FACULTY PROMOTION

Our successes also include the tenure and promotion of [Natalie Lira](#). Notably, Dr. Lira's case merited a Distinguished Promotion Award. She was named one of the College of Liberal Arts and Science's 2022-2023 Helen Corley Petit Scholars, for outstanding early career scholars.

Professor Lira has also graciously agreed to serve as Associate Chair of LLS. The appointment is provisional pending the approval of the Executive Committee, currently represented by the Faculty of the whole per our bylaws.

FACULTY AWARDS

Our faculty and affiliates are making waves across campus, particularly in the competition for the Humanities Research Institute (HRI) Campus Fellowship. [Janett Barragán Miranda](#) has earned one of these prestigious fellowships for her project "Hungering for Equality: The Community of Mexican-Origin from Post-WWII to Civil Rights." She is joined by [R. Elizabeth Velásquez Estrada](#) who also earned an HRI Fellowship for her project "Intersectional Justice Denied: Racist Warring Masculinity, Negative Peace and Violence in Post-Peace Accords El Salvador."

LLS affiliates also earned these recognitions. [Emma D. Velez](#) received an HRI fellowship for the project "Orienting Historias: Unraveling the Coloniality of Gender through Las Tres Madres" As did, [Damian Vergara Bracamontes](#) for the project "The Administration of Illegality and Mexican Migrant Life." Both are faculty in Gender and Women's Studies. [Yuridia Ramírez](#), in the History Department, also garnered this fellowship for her "Indigeneity on the Move: Transborder Politics from Michoacán to North Carolina."

Relatedly, LLS affiliate Josue David Cisneros, an associate professor in the Department of Communication, has been named a faculty convener for the Interseminar Initiative Project: "Imagining Otherwise: Speculation in the Americas."

We congratulate all these LLS faculty and affiliates. Please see [Current Fellows | HRI - Humanities Research Institute - University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign](#) for further details.



Janett Barragán Miranda
Miranda



R. Elizabeth Velásquez
Estrada



Emma Velez



Damian Vergara
Bracamontes



Yuridia Ramirez



Josue David Cisneros

OTHER FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I am pleased to report that [José A. de la Garza's](#) book "Queer in a Legal Sense: Chicanx Citizenship and other Lawful Fictions" is under advance contract with the University of Texas Press. He will be a fellow at the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory for 2022-2024. And, [Nic Flores](#) has received the Lincoln Excellence for Advanced Assistant Professors (LEAP) award.

We should also recognize that aside from carrying on her important work as Associate Dean of Inclusive Excellence for the College of Liberal Arts, among her other critical work, [Isabel Molina](#) will be serving our university as the Interim Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs for the college. We congratulate her on this honor.

We also congratulate [Angharad N. Valdivia](#). She has been named the Faculty Curator of Quinceañeras: Celebration, Joy, and Ethnic Pride." The exhibit opens September 24, 2022 at the Spurlock Museum. Relatedly, on September 23 at 11am at the Levis Faculty Center, Rachel Gonzalez-Martin, will deliver the lecture "Consuming the Quinceañera: Culture, Media, and Community Legacies." For more details, see [Quinceañeras: Celebration, Joy, and Ethnic Pride, Exhibits, Spurlock Museum, U of I \(illinois.edu\)](#).



José A. de la Garza



Nic Flores



Isabel Molina



Angharad N. Valdivia

NEW LECTURER AND POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATES

We also wish to welcome our newcomers. We have 2 new Chancellor Postdoctoral Research Associates:



Vicente Carrillo

The first is [Dr. Vicente Carrillo](#), who is an artist, scholar, and political education facilitator. Dr. Carrillo received his Ph.D. in Chicana/o & Central American Studies, with an emphasis in Gender Studies, from the University of California, Los Angeles. His research traces the contestations that arise from gentrification and the queer racialized bodies at the core of these debates. He explores these inquiries in Boyle Heights, East Los Angeles, a low-income immigrant Latinx neighborhood that has made national headlines for anti-gentrification mobilizations. Using an interdisciplinary approach, Dr. Carrillo works at the intersection of queer of color performance studies, gentrification studies, and Chicanx/Latinx Studies. Dr. Carrillo is also a practicing artist/painter. Dr. Carrillo's research has been supported by the University of Chicago's Inter-University Program for Latino Research Mellon Fellowship, the UCLA Gold Shield Alumni Fellowship, the UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowship, and the Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship. He will be working to complete his book manuscript: *Queer Latinx Regeneration: Boyle Heights and the Geographies of Gentrification*.



Joshua Redwine

Our second Chancellor Postdoctoral Research Associate is [Dr. Joshua Redwine](#). Dr. Redwine is a scholar and educator at the intersections of critical ethnic studies and queer of color critique. Dr. Redwine received his Ph.D. in Cultural Studies with an emphasis in Feminist Theory and Research from the University of California Davis, where he taught Chicanx Studies and developed a commitment to movement praxis inside and outside the classroom. He also holds an M.A. in Cultural Studies with an emphasis in Film and Media Theory from Claremont Graduate University. Born and raised in San Antonio, Texas by a community of women, Dr. Redwine's research combines auto-ethnographic writing, discourse analysis, critical visual cultural studies, and women of color feminist ethics and epistemologies to examine the many ways racialized gender and sexuality are mapped onto our bodies, our psyches, and our affective expressions. He will be working to complete his book manuscript,



Liliana Lule

titled *Vomiting Up Brown: Queer Regurgitative Rebellions and Repairs* during his tenure with LLS.

We also welcome, [Liliana Lule](#), who is joining us as a lecturer this year. Bearing a masters in Latin American and Caribbean Studies from UIUC and a second one in Creative Writing from Emerson College, Lule will be teaching several courses for our department including Mexican American History and Chicanas & Latinas: Self and Society.

STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

On April 30, 2022 we celebrated the graduating class of 2022. The 10 students presented their senior paper or senior thesis at the LLS Major Symposium. We congratulate the graduates and wish them all the best in their future.



Our world is fraught. We live with the weariness and the naturalization of the pandemic, and certain accompanying social plagues—the degradation of our natural environment, attacks on women’s bodily autonomy and human rights, and the intersecting oppressions of anti-Blackness, xenophobia, transphobia, and homophobia, as well as the wars in Europe, Africa and elsewhere, among numerous other pressing problems. Now is the time for us to come together and continue our important intellectual work, while modeling what we want our future to be to our colleagues, communities, and our students in and beyond our department.

Please stop by and say hello if you’re in the unit. And please consider wearing a mask in the unit and in your classes, given the recent spike in Covid positive cases.

Have a wonderful, healthy, and challenging academic year. I look forward to working with you.



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