

Service-Learning and Community Engagement: Working en comunidad with Latina/o/x Peoples in the US

Abstract:

This panel explores the ethical approaches to working with Latina/o/x communities within language courses and beyond, preparing Latina/o/x students for working with their own communities in different environments, and ensuring equitable practices and building relationships that are mutually beneficial for students and community, that can be extended beyond a college course.

Proposal:

This panel presentation of the edited book collection, *Service-Learning and Community Engagement: Working en comunidad with Latina/o/x Peoples in the US* brings together different approaches on integrating a careful and ethical framework for ensuring reciprocity in working with the Latina/o/x community as one that is rooted *en comunidad* and warns about extractive practices that fail to address power disparities between university and partner organizations. While reciprocal relations are key to this work, we believe that building sustainable relationships, especially among minoritized communities, is most fruitful when we consider them to be a long-term commitment, not just a semester or within a semester (Manzo, et al, 2020). That is, many of the authors doing this work are also actively involved with the organization(s) they partner with, as a long-term commitment and relationship-building practice to make sure we are not being extractive in our engagement with the community. This collection employs a decolonial and intersectional approach of thinking and working with the Latina/o/x community inside and outside the classroom in a variety of institutional contexts including both public and private Hispanic Serving Institutions, Predominantly White Institutions, and Ivy League Institutions. It centers on service-learning theory and practice that acknowledge the diverse experiences and complexity of this community's racialized identity and language, and their contributions as knowledge production. The work of the various authors in this collection provides an opportunity to broaden critical discourses around equitable education and racial justice in higher education.

Learning objectives:

Audience will:

- consider how to ensure just and ethical practices while working with the Latina/o/x community

- explore techniques to encourage and help students and the community exercise cultural humility in a service-learning course
- learn how to foster equitable engaged educational practices so that they promote racial justice beyond the university years

Presenters' topics

1. Proceda con cuidado: The ethics of working with Latina/o/x communities
2. Transforming Midwest public spaces with Día de Muertos community altars
3. Motivations, confidence, and perceived ability: Impacts of working alongside the community in Spanish for the Health Professions
4. Revisiting reflection: The necessary work for more transformative and equitable community engagement
5. Fostering Latinx civic and community engagement: A historical, decolonized and intersectional curriculum.