Curating Community-Based Learning for Latino Low-Income College Students

George J. Sanchez - 2019 HIPs Institute, Villanova University – June 20, 2019
Service-Learning History of Privilege

- University-Community Relationships historically based on privilege working with downtrodden – Carryover to origins of service learning

- John Dewey as beginning of service-learning
  - White, middle class Midwestern background looked at city as foreign terrain
  - Urban immigrant Chicago seen as laboratory of foreignness and model of assimilation

- W.E.B. DuBois a different model out of ethnic studies background
  - Harvard-trained Black sociologist unable to get traditional academic job in 1890s
  - Sociological studies: Philadelphia Negro, Black Atlanta studies
  - Worked in communities, became key editor of “Crisis” for NAACP
New Trajectories Needed for Latinos

- University of Southern California a PWI in Black/Latino Community of Los Angeles
  - Students are 15% Latino and 17% First Generation
  - Community-oriented Programs of Access, including Neighborhood Academic Initiative
  - Faculty overwhelmingly white, Latinos 2% of faculty, Key scholars in key departments
- One of few faculty from urban neighborhood, born in Boyle Heights, lived in S Central
  - Academic work on history of Boyle Heights, Immigration of Mexicans to Los Angeles
  - History in a Box working with Local schools
  - Boyle Heights Museum presenting local history to local community
History in a Box

- https://dornsife.usc.edu/videos/undergraduate/845/history-in-a-box/
Difference that FLI Latinx Students Make

- FLI = First Generation Low Income Students from Latinx Barrios
  - Often come from similar communities, Have insider knowledge & personal/academic interest
  - Need research experiences, but research that makes a "difference"/Relevant research
  - Connects them other programs where they can develop their own research projects

- Interested in Careers that Ties them Back to the Latinx Community
  - Research that leads to Ph.D. programs in Latinx Studies, History & American Studies
  - Teaching that leads to Teaching MA programs to be K-12 Teachers in the Community
  - Careers in Social Work & Non-profits that make a difference for Low income neighborhoods
Working in Teams across Generations

- Approach that is borrowed from STEM Laboratories, with Community as Laboratory
  - Direct work of discovery between Faculty member and Undergraduates: In the Archive
  - Work with Graduate/Ph.D. students that make work relevant to undergrads and graduates
  - Even incorporate their Parents, as reviewers of Spanish translations

- Interaction with Community Members as Experts
  - Getting direct feedback from Teachers of younger students, equally committed to community
  - Students themselves will enjoy some "lessons" and not others
  - Parents in the Community taken on “Community Walking Tour” by Elementary Teachers/Students
Boyle Heights Museum

https://www.boyleheightsmuseum.org
Combining Two HIPs in One Activity

- Traditional Historical Research with Community Engagement (Twice as Impactful??)
  - Archival Research to find photographs, documents, and build narratives that matter
  - Conducting interviews with historical actors, Transcribing, Putting story in larger context
  - Writing narratives that can be understood by community, Translations in Spanish
  - Immediate Feedback on Discovery: Ivonne Rodriguez & “Telegram to Labor Secretary Doak”

- Community-Based Programming
  - “Generation of 1968/2018”: Female Empowerment Across the Generations
  - Students learn to put together programming from start to finish
  - Combining & expanding expertise for event planning, community outreach
  - Includes website itself, Graphic design
Establishing a Team of Community Experts

- Project becomes known in Boyle Heights/Neighborhood of 100K
  - Casa del Mexicano Archives & the East LA Community Collaborative
  - Evaluate collection, Coordinate with USC Libraries. Trained in Collection Processing
  - Historical collection on “Undocumented Immigrants” would be lost from History w/o Team

- Working Across Institutional Lines
  - UC Irvine Professor Ana Rosas, also teaching Latinx History: Migrations Family projects
  - Regular collaborations, sharing students, attending each others undergrad conferences
  - “La Elotera’s Daughter” at UCI/Next Exhibition on Entrepreneurs of Boyle Heights
Integrating Into Curriculum

- Students Get Course Credit for Work
  - Independent Study, Summer Research Experiences
  - Paid Research Experience through Provost Initiative & Research Funds
  - Service-Learning Courses in History Produced Teacher Guides for Exhibitions
- Integrate Projects into Frosh Seminars, Intro Disciplinary Courses, My Advanced Courses
  - Mixing Latinx Research & Using Latinx Students as Community Experts
- Returning Research Experience into Upper Divisions and Capstones
  - Students join Research Programs: Mellon Mays, Gateway/McNair
  - Writing with Undergraduates: Getting Published/Presenting together at Conferences
  - 3 Current Team Members about to Embark on Senior Honors Theses
Questions?

- Powerpoint will be available on HIPs Institute Website by end of day
- Can reach out to me at: georges@usc.edu