Emerging Latino Communities Reading and Publishing Group
Request for Funds for Internal Reading/Discussion Group, Center for Latin American Studies
Date: October 29, 2018

1. Group organizer:
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2. Objectives and Purpose
This proposed group will discuss Latino health and health care access in the context of an emerging Latino community. The objectives are:
   1. Expedite publication of high quality research articles.
   2. Develop contextual awareness and knowledge of the health of Latinos in emerging communities.
   3. Establish connections among faculty, students and staff that can lead to future collaborative work in research, practice or publications on Latinos

3. Background
There is a sustained trend for Latinos to move into areas in which they have not traditionally settled, known as emerging Latino communities (ELC). In ELC, Latinos are a small (<5%) yet rapidly growing segment of the population. There, typically few services are culturally tailored to Latinos; social support is low, isolation is frequent and Latinos tend to be uninformed about their service options and rights. Therefore, Latino immigrants face unique challenges that affect their health and health care access. There is a small yet growing body of research about Latinos in ELC.

The greater Pittsburgh area and Allegheny County are ELC, where the Latino population expanded by 71% between 2000 and 2010. In 2010, Latinos comprised only 2% of the County’s residents. Then, about 50% of the Latino community was male with a mean age of 27. Mexicans were the largest subgroup, comprising 36% of the population. The median household income was lower than the general population ($41,490 vs. $51,366).

This Group will build on the current research of Pitt faculty and staff (e.g., P. Documet, S. Ross, C. Ruiz, M.A. Pesantes, L. Macia) in Allegheny County. We have found isolation and invisibility are great community concerns and they often lead to negative health outcomes (e.g., physical inactivity, drinking, and depression) and lack of information about social and health care resources. In response, we have implemented community-engaged interventions based on social support, often with community health workers (or promotores).

The Group will also build on two current initiatives that the Center for Health Equity started in 2013 responding to interest from students and faculty. One of them is the Interdisciplinary Latino Research Initiative (ILRI), consisting of one meeting each semester to build connections and discuss research on Latinos in our area. The other initiative is Focused Writing, which takes advantage of peer pressure and peer support and meets 7-8 times each semester. During each three-hour session, participating students, faculty and staff work in their own projects. There are three breaks to talk about ideas,
frustrations and future directions. Participants are in the fields of public health, policy, education, nursing, social work, and anthropology and came from Pitt as well as Duquesne University and CMU. Several attendees to Focused Writing are Latinos or interested in Latino research.

4. Proposed activities

a) Meeting frequency and location
Meetings will take place at least monthly at the Graduate School of Public Health, in one of the conference rooms on the first floor. Meetings are likely to happen on Fridays, which is the day with fewer formal classes. However, input from participants will determine the exact days and times. Meetings will last 1-1.5 hours and will feature light refreshments (e.g., coffee, tea, cookies).

b) Meeting content
At the meetings, we will do the following:
   1. Discuss readings about ELC.
   2. Discuss manuscripts that relate to Latinos in ELC. We will solicit manuscripts from participants. To get started, we have two manuscripts underway that can be discussed:
      - Peer led model of increasing health care access among immigrant men in an emerging Latino community. Authors: Documet, PI, Macia, L, Boyzo, R, Amruthapuri, R, and Thompson, A.
      - Adaptation of the Community Partnered Research Ethics Training in Practice (CPRET) for Community-Engaged Research with Latinos. Authors: Documet, PI, Ross, SE, Louth, W, Smith-Tapia, I, Jaime, MC, Miller, E.
   3. In addition, it is possible that we engage in collective drafting of a review manuscript about interventions in ELC, which is lacking in the literature.

c) Meeting style
Meetings will be participative, with rotating facilitators. First, the authors of the manuscript will explain briefly the manuscript’s objective, and the kind of feedback sought. Then, all participants will be able to offer feedback, without regard to hierarchies (i.e., faculty, student) to help build a team spirit. We will model the discussion on the highly successful Center for Health Equity Journal Club, where participants can voice their views in a safe environment. We expect that rotating facilitators develops facilitating skills and a collaborative atmosphere.

d) Management and information sharing
We will distribute the drafts via Box (available to all Pitt faculty, students and staff). Agendas will specify what manuscript and articles (as needed) participants should read before the meeting.

5. Use of funds
The funds will pay for refreshments and for the acquisition of readings, possibly books in electronic format.

6. Participants
At this time, there is interest from faculty (J. Delgado (Education), S.E. Ross (Education), R. Mejia (Biostatistics, CMU)) and students (W. Louth, G. Checo and E. Fitzpatrick from Public Health; C. Ruiz from Anthropology, Elisa laird from Nursing). Advertising and broad invitations can enlarge this group and make it even more multidisciplinary. To advertise the group, we will use the network of the CLAS, the Graduate School of Public Health, and the Center for Health Equity.