Highlights from Director Christian Zlolniski

WELCOME to the first issue of our CMAS Newsletter! The purpose of this publication is to keep you informed about past and current activities, projects, and initiatives led by the center. When I became director in 2013, CMAS already had a long history at the University of Texas at Arlington and the Latino community in North Texas product of the leadership of its former directors Jose Angel Gutierrez (founder), Manuel García y Griego, and Susan Gonzalez Baker. I feel privileged to follow on their steps and build on their accomplishments.

CMAS seeks to foster knowledge about Mexican American and Latino populations in the United States, with particular emphasis on Texas. We address important issues for the Latino community such as education, immigration, health, political representation, Latino/a representation in the media, Latinos in the arts, among others. We provide a physical and intellectual space for the scholarly and public discussion of these and other issues, and work with faculty and students across campus to promote interdisciplinary collaboration and dialogue. To this end every year the Center engages into a diverse set of programs and activities, the most important of which are highlighted below.

Speaker Series

Every year CMAS runs a lecture series addressing themes of significance to Mexican American and Latino populations. These events are open to students, the academic community, and the public at large. Last year’s theme “Justice, Representation & Empowerment” included seven talks, some co-sponsored with other academic units such as the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies, the Department of Modern Languages, the Art and Art History Department, and the Gallery at UTA. Our guests included Mexican poet Balam Rodrigo, Lori Celaya (U. of Idaho), Deborah Toner (U. of Leicester UK & CMAS guest scholar), film director John Valadez, and artists and painter John Hernandez, among others. On April 13th we held our Distinguished Lecture with anthropologist Leo Chavez (UC Irvine) who delivered the lecture “From Amnesty to Anchor Babies: Immigration Discourse Over the Last 50 Years”.

This year series “Re-Imagining Boundaries and Gender Identities in the Americas” features six events, including Chicano journalist Richard Gonzales, a theater play on the life of Frida Kahlo by Teatro Flor Candela (Dallas), Mexican historian Gabriela Cano (Colmex), historian Michael La Rosa (Rhodes College), social anthropologist Maria Ibarra (SDSU), and our Distinguished Speaker Maria Hinojosa, award winner journalist and host of NPR’s Latino USA. We hope you can join us!

Minor in Mexican American Studies

The Minor in Mexican American Studies is the centerpiece of the academic programming for undergraduate students. The Minor consists of 18 credit hours including core courses offered by CMAS faculty and electives taught across a variety of academic disciplines on campus. Last year we expanded the curriculum and added two new UTA faculty: Drs. Erin Murrah-Mandril (English) and Isabel Montemayor (Sociology & Anthropology). In addition, in collaboration with the School of Social Work, we launched a MAS Minor for SOCW undergraduates. The new Minor will also foster collaboration between faculty in both academic units who share similar scholarly interests.

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Student scholarships

Every year the Center awarded three scholarships: The Manuel Gamio Scholarship, the COLA Brandenburg Scholarship in Latino Studies, and the Brandenburg Scholarship for Outstanding Mexican American Studies Minor. Find out about the winners of the 2015-16 competition inside.

Community Outreach

One of our key missions consists in serving the Latino community in the DFW metroplex and engage in partnerships with our community stakeholders. On this matter, last year we launched a new community initiative: the CMAS Tech-Center. Funded with the grant Empower Hispanic America with Technology by LULAC and the GM Foundation, the Tech Center seeks to educate Latinos in the local community about technologies and educational opportunities in STEM professional careers. Learn more about this program inside.

Research Associates Program

To foster scholarship on Mexican American and Latino studies, CMAS provides support to faculty conducting research in this and related areas. This program also includes a series of seminars where affiliated faculty present work in progress to receive feedback from their colleagues. Our Research Associates this academic year (2016-17) are: Cristina Salinas and David LaFevor (History), Erin Murrah-Mandrill (English), Taryn Ozuna (Educational Leadership & Policy Studies), Isabel Montemayor (Sociology and Anthropology), and Ana Gregorio-Cano (Spanish). Welcome onboard!

In addition, throughout the year, CMAS sponsors a large and varied range of other activities and projects and collaborates with other units on campus as well as with various Hispanic student organizations. Find out about them in the Newsletter. We invite you to join us for our events and programs; you can find more information as it develops in our website http://www.uta.edu/cmas/index.html and/or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

I would like to thank the CMAS team who with its commitment and hard work keeps the Center going day after day. They include Diana Botello, Brenda Daniel, and our student-workers Diane Calderon, Jonathan Román-Díaz, and Ramon Castillo. Thank you all!

AXOLOTL (a-shó-lo-toll) is an homage to the ancient Aztec mythology. It means change, dialogue and future. Our newsletter aims to be the vehicle for disseminating and promoting events sponsored and organized by CMAS, its members, and the Latino community.
Re-Imagining Boundaries and Gender Identities in the Americas

**Fall 2016**

**SEP 14**

**Raza Rising: Chicanos in North Texas**
Richard J. Gonzales  
Journalist, former Fort Worth Star-Telegram columnist  
12:00–1:00 pm  
San Jacinto – University Center

**NOV 16**

**Elena Arizmendi: A Hidden Story of the Mexican Revolution in Texas**
Gabriela Cano  
Professor Centro de Estudios Sociológicos & Programa Interdisciplinario de Estudios de la Mujer (PIEM), El Colegio de México  
12:00–1:00 pm  
Room 108 – University Hall  
Co-sponsored with Center for Women and Gender Studies.

**LA FRIDAL DE FRIDA**
Teatro Flor Candela  
Theater production based on the diary of Frida Kahlo  
6:30–8:00 pm  
Rosebud Auditorium – University Center  
Co-sponsored with Multicultural Affairs & LGBTQA Program.

**Spring 2017**

**FEB 09**

**Chronicle of a Peace Foretold: Colombia (And the U.S.), 1953-2016**
Michael LaRosa  
Professor of History, Rhodes College  
12:00–1:00 pm  
Guadalupe Room – University Center

**MAR 08**

**The Ties That Bind: Mexicana Care Workers and Aging Americans Construct Kinship**
Maria Ibarra  
Associate Professor, Chair Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies, San Diego State University  
12:00–1:00 pm  
Location: TBD  
Co-sponsored with Center for Women and Gender Studies.

**APR 19**

**Distinguished Speaker Frontlines: Latinos & Immigration From a Woman’s Perspective**
Maria Hinojosa  
Journalist & award-winning anchor of NPR’s Latino USA; President of Futuro Media Group  
6:30 pm  
Parlor Room – Central Library 6th floor

Co-sponsored with Multicultural Affairs & LGBTQA Program.
CMAS TEAM

**Christian Zlopniski**
(Associate Professor of Anthropology and Director)

is a social anthropologist whose research interest focus on work labor and transitional migration flows of workers in the U.S. – Mexico border.

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**David LaFevor**
(Assistant Professor of History & Research Associate)

is a specialist in Modern Latin American History with a focus on ideas of race and ethnicity in transnational contexts.

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**Ignacio Ruiz–Pérez**
(Associate Professor of Spanish & Assistant Director)

is a specialist in Mexican and Spanish American literature, with a particular focus on twentieth-century poetry.

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**Erin Murrah-Mandril**
(Assistant Professor of History & Core Faculty)

is a scholar of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century American literature, focusing on Mexican American literary history.

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**Cristina Salinas**
(Assistant Professor of History & Core Faculty)

is a historian whose research interests include Mexican American history, border studies, immigration history, agricultural and labor history, and Texas history.

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**Ana Gregorio-Cano**
(Assistant Professor of Spanish & Research Associate 2016-2017)

is a specialist in translation whose research interests include translator training, and intercultural (communicative) competence. Her emerging research focuses on community translation and interpreting.

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**Isabel Montemayor**
(Assistant Professor of Anthropology & Research Associate 2016-2017)

is a medical anthropologist specialized on health disparities in minority populations and Mexican-U.S. immigration/migration.

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**Taryn Ozuna Allen**
(Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, & Research Associate 2016-2017)

specializes on education. Her research interests focus on the educational experiences of traditionally underrepresented student populations, particularly Latino students, as they access, transition, and enroll in higher education.
CMAS TEAM

Brenda Daniel
(Program Coordinator)

Diana Botello
(Administrative Assistant)

Diane Calderon
(Student Assistant)

Jonathan M. Román-Díaz
(Student Assistant)

Ramon Castillo
(Student Assistant)
AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS, the Center organized and awarded three student competitions for academic scholarships. Two of them were for students minoring in MAS – the Manuel Gamio Scholarship in the fall semester, the Pat Brandenburg for MAS minors in spring– and a second Pat Brandenburg scholarship for undergraduate students in COLA interested in Latino studies. The awards were given by an internal CMAS faculty committee based on students’ grades, letter of application, and proven record of community involvement, among other criteria. The student winners were publicly recognized at CMAS distinguished lecture on April 13th, 2016.

¡Muchas felicidades a los ganadores!

The M. Gamio Scholarship was awarded to Cathy Muñoz, a major in Spanish and MAS minor.

The Brandenburg Scholarship in Latino Studies in COLA was awarded to Cindy Chavez, a Major in History.

The Brandenburg Scholarship for Outstanding Mexican American Studies Minor was awarded to Victor Ortis, a Major in Spanish.

Look out for the scholarship calls for 2016-17!
ON OCTOBER 19TH, the Center for Mexican American Studies and student organizations LASO, La Sociedad Hispánica, and Lambda Theta Phi organized the panel discussion “Mexican American Heritage: The Controversy.” The event focused on the disputed high school textbook proposed for Mexican American studies currently under consideration by the Texas Board of Education. The panel was moderated by professor Cristina Salinas (History, UTA), and had the outstanding participation of Professor Juan Tejeda (Palo Alto College, San Antonio). There was a live discussion on the background surrounding the proposal of this book and the panel was attended by 70 people.

CMAS will host its traditional **Fiesta Navideña** on **Thursday, December 8th at 6 pm** in the Training Room (Swift Center). We will have delicious Mexican treats and eats for you to enjoy all while listening to live music from our very own UTA Mariachi Band “Los Potrillos”. Friends and Family are more than welcome to attend, we hope to see you there!

The brothers of Sigma Lambda Beta, LASO, La Sociedad Hispánica, and the UTA Anthropology Department are hosting a **Día De Los Muertos** celebration on campus this November 2nd at 7pm-10pm in the UC Rio Grande. There will be an altar, food, face painting, dancers, and much more!

The Center for Mexican American Studies would like to host a series of conversations for UTA graduate students from all disciplines interested in forming a **Latino/a Graduate Student group**. This group is intended to bring students from different departments and who work on Latino/a issues to meet to discuss research, engage in peer mentorship, and form community on the UTA campus. If you are interested in participating, please contact csalinas@uta.edu for meeting times.
ON FEBRUARY 6th, 2016, CMAS celebrated the opening of the Tech-Center. The Center seeks to reach out to Latinos in the local community about the use of technologies and educational opportunities in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math). It also helps Latino youth navigate the college admissions process and explore opportunities in higher education. The Center is supported by the LULAC’s Empower Hispanic America with Technology grant, funded by the General Motors Foundation, awarded to CMAS on December 2015. CMAS was chosen to represent one of five cities in the country to participate in LULAC’s project.

CMAS Technology Center currently provides three types of services to the community and UTA students.

Technology Lab

Open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5pm – 8pm, it provides computers and internet access as well as printing services. The center has three on site mentors (UTA Students) who work with students and parents helping with FAFSA Completion, tutoring, resume building, search of resources in the community, etc.

Mentoring

Our mentors offer assistance to students in a variety of STEM-related courses as well as information to parents in the community.

STEM Career Workshops

Students from elementary to high school are invited to participate in hands-on activities where they could work on different projects related to STEM fields. Concurrently sessions are offered for parents in Spanish about college funding, application process, and UTA support services. Our workshops include a free lunch or light breakfast, and a campus tour.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

STEM Workshop - Engineering Day
November 19th, 2016
09:30am – 1:30pm
at Nedderman Hall – Room 106

Please visit the CMAS website for more details on this event

All our services are free of charge
Dr. David Lafevor

Published an article “Prizefighting and Civilization in the Mexican Public Sphere in the Nineteenth Century” in Radical History Review. He also was invited to present preliminary work on his second monograph project, tentatively titled “The Slave Ship Ciceron and the Argüelles Affair: Abolition, Extradition, and the Contraband Slave Trade” by Harvard University’s Hutchins Center in Havana. In 2016, he was awarded a major project grant by the British Library Endangered Archives Programme. Over the next two years he will lead a team to locate, digitize, and preserve around one million pages of unique documents pertinent to the African slave trade to the Caribbean. He was also informed that his first coauthored book, The Third Century: A History of U.S.-Latin American Relations, will be published in December 2016, by Rowman and Littlefield Press.

Dr. Erin Murrah-Mandrill

Assistant Professor of English, will have her article, “Ruiz de Burton’s Contemporary Novel: Multifarious Time in The Squatter and the Don” published in the fall issue of Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies (vol. 41, no. 2). The article examines the way that time is figured as a colonial force within one of the earliest novels of Mexican American literary recovery. She recently designed the online version of the UTA’s Introduction to Mexican American Studies. In September 25th, Dr. Salinas and Dr. Murrah-Mandrill both participated in a discussion of Luis Alberto Urrea’s book Into the Beautiful North for the Irving Public Library’s NEA Big Read Event.

Dr. Ignacio Ruiz-Pérez

Published the book of poetry Libro de la ceniza (Toledo: Celya, 2016), which was awarded the XIV León Felipe International Poetry Prize. His article “Elogio de la imaginación critica: Cervantes, Fuentes y la política de la novela total” was recently published in Romance Notes (vol. 56, no. 1). His article “Chac Mool’ de Carlos Fuentes y ‘Coatlicue’ de Elena Poniatowska: tiempos, presencias, diálogos” has been accepted for publication in the Bulletin of Hispanic Studies.

Dr. Christian Zolniski

Last year he published the book De jornaleros a colonos: Residencia, trabajo e identidad en el Valle de San Quintín (COLEF, Mexico) in co-authorship with sociologist Laura Velasco and demographer Marie Laure Coubes. The book sheds light on how transnational agribusinesses in Mexico are growing crops to meet U.S. demand, examining the work and living conditions of farmworkers who produce these crops south of the border in Valle de San Quintin, Baja California, an agricultural community located 190 miles from San Diego.

In 2016, C. Zolniski was appointed to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s Mexican American Studies Field of Study Advisory Committee. He is one of four faculty members on the committee from a University of Texas System.