

Curriculum Vitae

Maria Elena Cruz

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Education

Ph.D. Candidate, Anthropology. Expected completion date: May 2013
Subfield: Social Anthropology/Mexican - American Borderlands Program
Dissertation title: *“Wixárika Art and Artists: Resisting Neocolonialism While Crossing Visible and Invisible Borders”*
Dissertation committee: Martha Menchaca (Chair), Pauline Turner Strong, Shannon Speed, John Hartigan, and Diane Pearson.
Doctoral Portfolios: Mexican American Studies and Indigenous Studies
M.A. Anthropology. 2007. The University of Texas at Austin
Subfield: Social Anthropology/Mexican - American Borderlands Program and Indigenous Studies
Program B.A., English. 2003. The University of California at Berkeley.

Research and Teaching Interests

Anthropology with a focus on Indigenous Mexican American Studies that is Indigeneity, as well as (im)migration, gender, and transnational Studies with Native American (Indians) on both the U.S. and Mexican borders, racialization, and feminist anthropology.
Geographic specialization: U.S. – Mexico Borderlands, Mexico, California and Texas.
***Native Fluency in Spanish**

Teaching Experience

Currently **Adjunct Professor** for The Department of Mexican American Studies
San Jose State University, San Jose, CA.
MAS 10A: MAS 10B

Summer 2012 **Teaching** at College Track in East Palo Alto, CA
EPA ASAP Humanities Curriculum
English Composition with an Emphasis on Cultural Studies

Summer 2012 **Teaching** with Sophie Scholars at Sacred Heart Prep High School in Atherton, CA
Creative Art: Yarn-Painting, Oral History, and Oral Tradition.

- Summer 2012 **Teaching** with Sophie Scholars at Sacred Heart Prep High School in Atherton, CA
Poetry and Writing Poesia's
- Spring 2007 **Teaching Assistant** at The University of Texas, Austin
UT Austin, Course: ANT322M/MAS 374/LAS 324L *Mexican American Indigenous Heritage
Advanced Seminar in Cultural Studies*
- Fall 2006 **Teaching Assistant** at The University of Texas, Austin
U.T. Austin Course: History 314/ Mexican American Studies History of Mexican
American in the United States.
Advanced Seminar in Cultural Studies
- Spring 2006 **Teaching Assistant** at the University of Texas, Austin Course: Anthropology
302 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Social Science General Education)
- Summer 2006 **Teaching Assistant** at the University of Texas, Austin Anthropology
302 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Social Science General Education)
- Spring 2005 **Teaching Assistant** at The University of Texas, Austin
Anthropology 302-Spring 2005 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Social Science
General Education)

Course Curricula Development

- Currently In this course, we study Mexican American history from pre-Columbian times to the aftermath of the US Civil War. With racial and geographical ties that long predate the nation's founding, Mexican Americans have had an important historical presence in the US and have played a dynamic role in shaping what it means to be "American." In fact, Mexican Americans currently constitute nearly 10% of the US population, and a full 35% of the state of California. Nevertheless, they are commonly perceived to be only recent arrivals to this country and their contributions often have been minimized, if acknowledged at all. Rather than focus exclusively on the "who," "what" and "when" of history, together we will focus on the many "why"s and "how"s: Why did the past unfold as it did? Why does focusing on Mexican American culture challenge any assumptions we may have about early US history? How do the forces of race, class and gender shape this era of US history?

- Summer 2012 **College Track, East Palo Alto, CA**

This syllabus was created to teach the History of Mexican American Studies with an emphasis on Indigeneity. While learning about ones personal identity, culture, and

heritage the following key concepts and skills are reviewed and practiced; Descriptive writing with sensory detail; ease with composition and written expression; Research skills, identifying varied and valid sources, forming questions, navigating books and scholarly journals, taking notes, summarizing and synthesizing. By grounding these concepts and skills in a personally relevant narrative, my intent is to make a lasting impression in each student's operative consciousness in having them understand the history of their culture and identity and why it is important to understand this in a time where our society is so focused on technological advances and consumerism.

Summer 2012 **Sacred Heart Prep, Atherton, CA**
Yarn-Painting Class (8-6 to 8-16-12)

The Wixárika (Huichol), and indigenous community from Jalisco, Mexico traditionally create art called Nierika, (pronounced Near-eeeka), which is a yarn painting. This class is designed to teach young scholars the art of creating oral history, narrative, and experience in their own creation of a yarn painting. This artwork will be symbolic and represent the student's cultural experience and beliefs in their lives today.

Summer 2012 **Sacred Heart Prep, Atherton, CA**
Poetry, Poesia Class (8-6 to 8-16-12)

This poetry class will focus on the personal landscapes of ones experience and imagination. This class will provide a rich opportunity for creative and intellectual exchange, by reading poetry from well known English, American, Latina/o and African American authors, which will inspire us to create our own poems in class. The purpose of this workshop is to get you to write poetry about what you are passionate about. We will analyze the rhythms, similes, and metaphors that make for a great poem and use these tools to create our own.

Fall 2004 **The National Hispanic University San Jose, CA.**
Syllabus was developed to teach "English Without Any Borders 101" for The National Hispanic University, Upward Bound Program at San Jose State University for the Summer Residential Program. This class aimed at giving high school students an approach to a deeper, fuller understanding of the English language and a cognizance of the power that language holds in our society, these classes also aimed at helping students formulate a thesis using the MLA format.

Spring 2004 **The University of California, Berkeley**
Syllabus was developed for the English Department. English 98/198: De-Cal Class was taught as an Undergraduate class called, "English Without Any Borders," "Ingles Sin Barreras" This course aimed at giving a student a friendly approach to a deeper, fuller understanding of the English language and cognizance of the power, between power and knowledge. This class aimed to help freshman and transfer students who were English and non-English majors with the transition of writing for college.

Academic Administrative Appointments

College Track

1877 Bay Road, East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Academic Teacher (Part-time)

January 2, 2012 to present

I help under-served and under-represented high school students who are motivated to earn a college degree. I assist them with their academic assignments in small groups. I listen, brainstorm, make suggestions, ask questions, and offer encouragement. I encourage the students to go beyond just finishing homework, and share my experiences as they relate to school. I ensure students stay on task for the duration of the teaching session. I specialize in teaching them English (literary analysis, essay writing) Social Studies (World Studies, American History, Modern European History, Government, Economics) Languages (primarily Spanish) I have also built great mentoring relationships with all of my students.

The University of Texas at Austin

1 University Station C3200

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Academic Research Fellow

August 2007 to May 2010

I was awarded a competitive University Continuing Fellowship to complete my field research. This award is based on major accomplishments, a well-defined program of research, strong personal statement, and letters of recommendation. I coordinated and prepared timely, accurate and comprehensive written materials as required by advisor, the department of Anthropology, and the National Science Foundation.

San Jose State University

1 Washington Square San Jose, CA 95192-0127

Academic Coordinator, McNair Scholars Program

August 2004 to July 2005

Responsibilities included assisting low-income first generation college students with the graduate application process. Conducted needs assessment, and planned course of study for McNair Scholars in preparation for admission to graduate school. Monitored academic progress and coordinated educational enhancement activities such as campus visits, research forums, and travel to national and regional conferences. Developed and maintained a network with professors and graduate deans at doctoral granting institutions throughout the country. Maintained a library of resources (catalogs, applications, scholarship files) for use by Scholars. Worked closely with faculty research Mentors helping Scholars prepare for summer research internships. Student Counseling: experience in academic advising and career planning. Implemented effective public relations strategy for recruitment of program participants. Provided information about SJSU policies, regulations and resources; assisted students with financial aid applications, career planning, and personal problem solving strategies. Maintained Scholar's records, prepared reports as required and developed retention and matriculation strategies. Implemented, edited and coordinated the first San Jose University McNair Scholars Journal.

National Hispanic University

1427 Story Road, San Jose, CA 95127

Interim Director & College Advisor, Upward Bound Program

2003 -2004

Responsibilities included assisting multicultural, diverse first-generation high school students with the process of undergraduate college admissions. Ensure accurate counseling and advising for all participants. Assisted in the advancement of students and parents in the area of educational, financial aid, and career matters. Worked effectively with potential college applicants, parents, and high school counselors. Planned programs and large group functions for students, parents and professors. Trained a staff of five for the summer academic year and summer college residential program. Implemented tutoring programs for each grade level. Devised an individual academic plan for each participant. I facilitated and implemented educational recreational programs for the academic year and summer college residential program. Held conferences to monitor student progress. Designed and taught class sessions for the Summer College Residential Program.

University of California Berkeley, CA.

Berkeley, CA

Cal Cares program Assistant II, Financial Aid Office

2002 -2003

Assisted students with academic support services, answered phones, and organized outreach projects Planned community building social events to inform students about financial opportunities Helped create and participated in Financial Aid presentations for students and parents. Aided students with filling out of FASFA forms. Responsible for collecting, organizing and maintaining academic files for each student.

University of California Berkeley, CA

Berkeley, CA

Program Assistant McNair Scholars Program

2002 -2003

Assisted students with graduate application process. Mentored students of low socio-economic and/or first generation backgrounds who were interested in doing undergraduate research, and who wanted to pursue Ph.D. Assisted students in the program with formulating their research questions. Aided students with their final draft of their research before publication. Helped incoming freshman and transfer students with academic program planning. Assisted with the McNair Scholars Symposium by registering scholars, and facilitating presentations. Conducted outreach & Recruitment for potential McNair Scholars.

Academic Presentations and Invited Lectures

- 2012 American Anthropological Association (AAA). Borders and Crossings: “Wixárika (Huichol) Resistance Opposed to Forced Migration and Relocation.” November 14th -18th, in San Francisco, CA.
- 2012 National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA). “Women of Color Scholars as Whole Beings, Focusing on Wellness, Balance, Motherhood, and More.” Will be presenting November 8-11th, in Oakland, CA.
- 2012 “Being Happy While Thinking Critically and Consciously in Academia.” Teaching Session at El Centro Chicano Center, Stanford University, CA.
- 2012 Spirituality and Healing Through Poesia: “Wixárika, Heart, Mind, Soul and the Four Directions.” El Centro Chicano, Stanford University. February 2012. Presenter.
- 2011 “Wixárika (Huichol) Resistance to Neo-Colonial Imperialism in Wirikuta, “Real de Catorce” Native American Indigenous Studies Association at the University of California, Davis. May 2011. Presenter
- “Wixárika (Huichol) Resistance Opposed to Forced Migration and Relocation: Crossing Visible and “Invisible” Borders” Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS). August 2011. Presenter
- 2010 “Wixárika Autonomy and Resistance” Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. Department of Latin American Studies. **Invited Guest Lecturer**
- The Center for Mexican American Studies Graduate Portfolio Plática Series: “Migration, Relocation, for Wixárika (Huichol) Art and Artist: Crossing Visible and ‘Invisible’ Borders” The University of Texas, Austin. May 2010. Keynote Speaker
- 2009 Indian Pre-Hispanic Art and History in the Region of Zacatecas and Jalisco. The University of Zacatecas, Za, Mexico “Huichol Art Pre-Hispanic and Post Modern Art” 2009. Presenter
- American Anthropological Association (AAA): “The Persistence on Decolonizing Anthropology: Chicana/o Ethnographies from the Borderlands of Anthropology.” December 2009. Philadelphia, PA. Presenter
- Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS): “Wixáritari (Huichol) Women Crossing “Invisible Borders.” July 2009. New Mexico State University. Presenter
- 2008 National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies 2008. “Reflections From the Field: Chicana/o Autoethnography in the Borderlands Arte, Espiritualidad, Poesía y Contrabando.” April 2008. Austin, Texas. **Chair/Presenter.**
- First Conference on Ethnicity, Race, and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean. University of California, San Diego “Wixaritari (Huichol) from Huejuquilla el

Alto Jalisco, Mexico: Creating Art in a Capitalist Global Art Market.” May 2008. San Diego, CA. Presenter

2003 Extended Opportunity Program (EOP) at the College of San Mateo “Pursing Your Dreams” **Invited Key Note Speaker for Commencement 2003**

2002 “McNair Scholars Symposium Summer 2002.” “Wixárika (Huichol) Art A Representation of Religious Beliefs Exploitation in a Western Market Economy, Berkeley, CA. May, 2002. Presenter

Fellowships and Awards

2012 Presidential Dissertation Scholarship, University of Texas, Austin
2009 National Summer Institute Doctoral Students, University of Denver, Co
2008 Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship Competition
2007 National Science Foundation (NSF) University of Texas, Austin
2006-2008 U.S. - Mexico/Borderlands Research Award, UT Austin College of Liberal Arts
2007 Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF) Graduate Research University of Texas at Austin
2006-2007 University of Texas at Austin Latin American Studies Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Summer Fellowship in Zacatecas, Mexico.
2005 Southwest Airlines & Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities *Giving Flight To Your Success Program* Award University of Texas at Austin
2005 Ronald E. McNair Graduate Fellowship at the University of Texas at Austin
2002 Ronald E. McNair Scholars Undergraduate Research Fellowship the University of California Berkeley, Berkeley CA.
2001 P.E.O Re-entry Women’s Transfer Scholarship at the University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA
2001 Chicano/Latino Transfer Scholarship College of San Mateo (CSM)
2001 Carlena and C.S. “Jum” Morris Memorial Scholarship College of San Mateo (CSM)
2001 Allan R. Brown Outstanding Student Service Award Scholarship College of San Mateo (CSM)

Research Experience

2007-2010 Conducted ethnographic field research in Jalisco, and Zacatecas, Mexico, for my dissertation on “Wixáritari Art, Artists and Identity In and Outside of Wixárika Communities: Crossing Invisible and Visible Borders from 1950’s to 2010.”

2002-2007 Conducted ethnographic field research in Mexico, on El Arte Del Huichol: Commodification of the Sacred Art in El Alto Jalisco Mexico, and in Quintana Roo, Mexico. 2002 to 2007

2002 Conducted ethnographic field research of Tourism on El Arte Del Huichol: Commodification of the Sacred Art in Tijuana, Mexico. 2002

Publications

Cruz, Maria E. (2002). "Huichol Art A Commodification of the Sacred" McNair Scholars Journal, Berkeley, CA.

Cruz, Maria E. (2003-2005) Publicist for Chicano Latino Alumni Club (CIAC)

Formulated press releases to publicize fundraisers for Chicano/a Scholarships.

The Chicano/Latino Alumni Club (CLAC) who is committed to maintaining the University of California, Berkeley's tradition of academic excellence through diversity, by helping to fund one or two Chicano/a Latino students with a four year scholarship every year. I have helped to create press releases to promote fundraiser events to raise money for this scholarship award.

Membership in Professional Organizations

2011-present Wixárika Research Center-Board Member-Secretary

2011-presnet Native American Indigenous Studies Association at the University of California, Davis

2009-present National Women's Studies Association

2007-present American Anthropological Association

2006-present National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies

2006-present Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social/Women Active in Letters and Social Change (MALCS)

Community Service

2012 **Wixárika Research Center**

I am currently on the board as secretary of this non-profit publically supported foundation that promotes public awareness of the Huichol (Wixárika) Indian culture of Mexico. The founders Juan Negrin and Yvonne Negrin established this center in 1970. For the past forty years, the Wixárika Research Center has collected religious art and artifacts to help the public appreciate and understand it as window into the Wixárika culture.

2009 present **American Anthropological Association: Student Representative for the Association of Latina and Latino Anthropologists (ALLA)**

As a volunteer I am in charge of the recruitment and retention for this association as well as organizing workshops and panels that benefit students as well as professors. In addition, I actively promote the concerns of undergraduate and graduate students to the ALLA board members.

2006-2007 **Anthropology & Education Quarterly (AEQ)**

Anthropology & Education Quarterly is a peer-reviewed journal that publishes scholarship on schooling in social and cultural context and on human learning both inside and outside of schools. I volunteered to read articles that rely primarily on

ethnographic research to address immediate problems of practice as well as broad theoretical questions. AEQ also publishes on the teaching of anthropology.

- 2006 -2007 **Chicana/o and Latina/o Graduate Student Association (CLGSA)**
I was Co-Vice President of CLGSA, an organization committed to mentor high school, and undergraduate students, and all students from groups that have historically been and are underrepresented in American higher education. Our goal is to acquaint students with career opportunities and academic challenges associated with advance study in a wide range of disciplines. The program seeks to assist outstanding students to finish their bachelor degree and enter research-oriented Master's, and Ph.D. programs.
- 2006 -2007 **Chicano Latino Alumni Club (CLAC)**
The Chicano/Latino Alumni Club CLAC) is committed to maintaining the University of California, Berkeley' tradition of academic excellence through diversity, by providing mechanisms for networking and stewardship amongst students and alumni.
- 2002 **Minority Grad Forum**
The California Forum for Diversity in Education is designed to acquaint students from groups that have historically been and still are underrepresented in American higher education with career opportunities and academic challenges associated with advance study in a wide range of disciplines. The program seeks to assist outstanding undergraduate students to enter research-oriented Master's, and Ph.D. programs.
- 2004- 2005 **Experience Berkeley at Community College**
Peer Advocate: Hosted Southern California Community College students during weekend visit to experience UC Berkeley.
- 1998 - 2002 **El Buen Pastor, East Palo Alto, CA**
Volunteer Internship in East Palo Alto, CA
Served as a Teacher Assistant and tutored junior high and high school, and evaluated course assignments. Taught English and other subjects. Organized educational field trips for parents and children. Assisted students and parents with the college application process. Translated for Spanish-speaking parents. Assisted students in planning class schedules for the semester.

References:

Martha Menchaca, PHD

Professor in the Department: Department of Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts Center for Women's and Gender Studies, College of Liberal Arts Center for Mexican American Studies, College of Liberal Arts

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The University of Texas at Austin

Department of Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts

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