

Curricular Innovation Application

Participant: Michael Niño, Department of Sociology

Curriculum Innovation Type: Inquiry-Based Module

Proposed Curricular Innovation:

Course and Goals of the Innovation

I am seeking LARC funds to develop two inquiry-based modules that focus on quantitative literacy for the following course: Latina/o Sociology. This is a 100-level course fulfills a mode of inquiry credit and is restricted to freshmen and sophomores. The course is offered annually and enrolls approximately 25-30 students from a variety backgrounds and disciplines. Latina/o Sociology is designed to help students understand and critically evaluate the contemporary social, political, and economic issues that inform the Latina/o experience in the United States. In an attempt to complement this overarching course objective, the proposed inquiry-based modules have three goals: (1) increase quantitative literacy, (2) help students distinguish between personal beliefs and evidence, and (3) foster new ways of understanding the contemporary Latina/o experience.

Narrative Description of the Innovation and Assessment

Using quantitative data from the Pew Hispanic Center, the first module will challenge student's key assumptions concerning racial and ethnic identity in the Latina/o community. Students will be given a series of frequency tables and cross-tabulations that focus on racial and ethnic identification among a nationally representative sample of Latina/os. The primary question students will grapple with is "Do Latina/os consider their Latina/o background as part of their racial background, ethnic background, or both?" Students will attempt to answer this question in a two-to-three-page paper. Applying appropriate scholarly conventions while reporting, students will be required to use theory and quantitative data to assess the validity of their key assumptions. This assignment will be worth 10 percent of their final grade.

The second module will focus on the issue of undocumented Latina/o immigrants. It is estimated that there are currently 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. How accurate is this number? In this module, students will be given data from the U.S. Census to better understand how we estimate the number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. Students will write a two-to-three-page paper assessing the accuracy of the current estimates and the strengths and weakness of the data provided. This assignment will count for 10 percent of their final grade.

In order to assess the overall innovation, students will be given a series of quizzes to assess their quantitative literacy skills, as well as attitudes towards quantitative data analysis and evidence-based understanding. The first quiz will be given at the beginning of the semester. The same quiz will be given at mid-term, and at the end of the semester. I will compare the scores of each quiz to assess whether students' quantitative abilities, and their attitudes towards quantitative methods improved throughout the semester.

Work Plan and Implementation Schedule

I will begin working on the modules June 1st and plan to have both completed by June 30th. During this period I will consult with a number of sociology instructors that have developed similar modules at other universities. Leveraging the guidance and resources these instructors provide, I will then compile all of the necessary datasets for both modules and organize the raw data into smaller manageable sets. Detailed step-by-step instructions that demonstrate how to access and use the selected datasets will also be developed during this period. Finally, the assignments along with their corresponding rubrics will be created. The proposed modules will be integrated in the Latina/o course in the fall of 2016.

Proposed budget

I am seeking a LARC grant in the sum of \$2,100. This includes a \$2,000 stipend, plus an additional \$100 for supplies.

Stipend	\$2,000.00
Supplies (copying, etc.)	\$100.00
Total:	\$2,100.00