ALSAME Conference a Success at MSU

MSU hosted the 13th annual Advocates for Latino Student Advancement in Michigan Education conference Sept. 16. CLS PhD students and faculty introduced local high school students to Chicano and Latino Studies in higher education, the history of the field, and reasons for academic success in this area. The conference was designed to increase access, awareness, and opportunity for Latino students in Michigan.

Research shows that Latino students benefit from exposure to classes focused on the art, history, literature and scientific contributions of their community. Our students have access to their culture and history in an academic setting. By seeing themselves reflected in the curricula, students are empowered to explore and question from this new perspective.

A 2009 educational study found that: 20% of elementary and high school students are Latino; 62% of Latinos 25 and older had at least a high school education; 12% of college students are Latino; 3.7 million Latinos 18 and older had at least a bachelor’s; 13% of Latinos 25 and older with a bachelor’s degree or higher; 935,000 of Latino students 25 and older had advanced degrees.

ALSAME is a resource for students and parents providing information about various areas and courses.

Felicia Rice National Book Launch Cosponsored by CLS

CLS cosponsored the national book launch of book artist, publisher, and educator Felicia Rice in conjunction with the MSU Libraries Colloquia Series on Sept. 19. Rice performed from her book, Documentado/Undocumented Ars Shamánica Permformativa. The two subtitles refer to different aspects of the project’s content. Documentado/Undocumented ties to the performance scripts embedded in the printed sheets draw on Gómez-Peña’s immigrant experiences and observations of the political, geographic, social, and psychological boundaries between the US and Mexico. Rice has collaborated with writers, visual and performing artists through Moving Parts Press out of Santa Cruz, CA. The book is a collaboration between Rice, Guillermo Gomez-Peña and four other artists. Gomez-Peña is a Chicano performance artist, writer, activist and educator. The book includes critical commentary by Jennifer Gonzalez. The case includes a video by Gustavo Vazquez, an altar and a cabinet of curiosities. When opened, the interactive sound and light art of Zachary Watkins are activated. The book is on display in the Cesar E. Chavez Collection in the Main Library.

Introduction to Chicano/Latino Studies Class Spring 2015

CLS will once again offer SSC 290—Introduction to Chicano/Latino Studies. The spring 2015 class will be held 3-4:20 pm Tuesdays and Thursdays at 220 Bessey Hall. Dr. Isabel Ayala will teach.

The class will address the questions of “Who are Chicanas/os? Who are Latinas/os? What are their histories in the United States? And how are these terms related to Hispanicic?”

The course will introduce Chicano/Latino Studies as an academic field of research and scholarship. Students will read and discuss foundational works by scholars from across the disciplines. Learn how, and that Latinas/os have contributed to the development of the US for over 100 years. We will also survey the development of Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies over time to see how it has changed and to determine what kind of work defines the field now. Students will also become acquainted with the tools used by artists, activists, and scholars to study and document US Latina/o life since the 16th century. They will leave with enhanced skills in the critical analysis of scientific and non-scientific work focused on Latina/o social phenomena and cultural production.