



Project **MALES**

Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success

## **Bridging the Gap through Theory & Practice: Empowering Latino Students through Service Learning**

Jorge Segovia, M.Ed  
Jorge Rodriguez  
Rodrigo Aguayo  
Enrique Aguayo

7th Annual Texas Higher Education Symposium  
August 4th & 5th, 2016



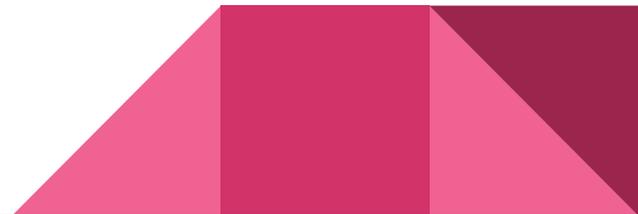
# Overview

Define “Service Learning” and briefly go over the literature

Explain what Project MALES is (briefly)

Introduce **I**nstructing **M**ales through **P**eer **A**dvising **C**ourse **T**racks (IMPACT) - our service learning course

Provide examples of how IMPACT impacts our Latino undergraduates educational outcomes and empowers them





# What Is Service Learning?

- The National Service Learning Clearinghouse define service learning as:
  - “...a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities”



# Service Learning Is...

- A form of experiential learning
- Links both theory and practice
- Connects students to their community as well as faculty through the integration of the service-learning activity (mentoring) and the reflection that takes place in the classroom

(Perrin, 2014; Greenwood, 2015)



# Service Learning Is...

More powerful when knowledge is developed within a context of personal and environmental demands of an outside organization (the community)

Within this context, students are able to bridge that gap between theory and practice as they progress through a cycle of experience, concept, reflection and action



# Why Focus on Latino Males - The Environmental Demand

## From Research to Action

- What is Project MALES?
- Structure
- Goals

## Student Mentoring Program

- University Support System
- Challenges
- Moving Forward

## IMPACT

- Service Learning Course (1 Hours)
- Curriculum
- Focus





## Why Latino Males? Understanding the Environmental Demand

### Issue

Many are unaware of the depth of the gender gap; It's a SILENT CRISIS

### Skeptics & Naysayers

Some are unwilling to discuss; some find it counter-productive

### College Enrollment

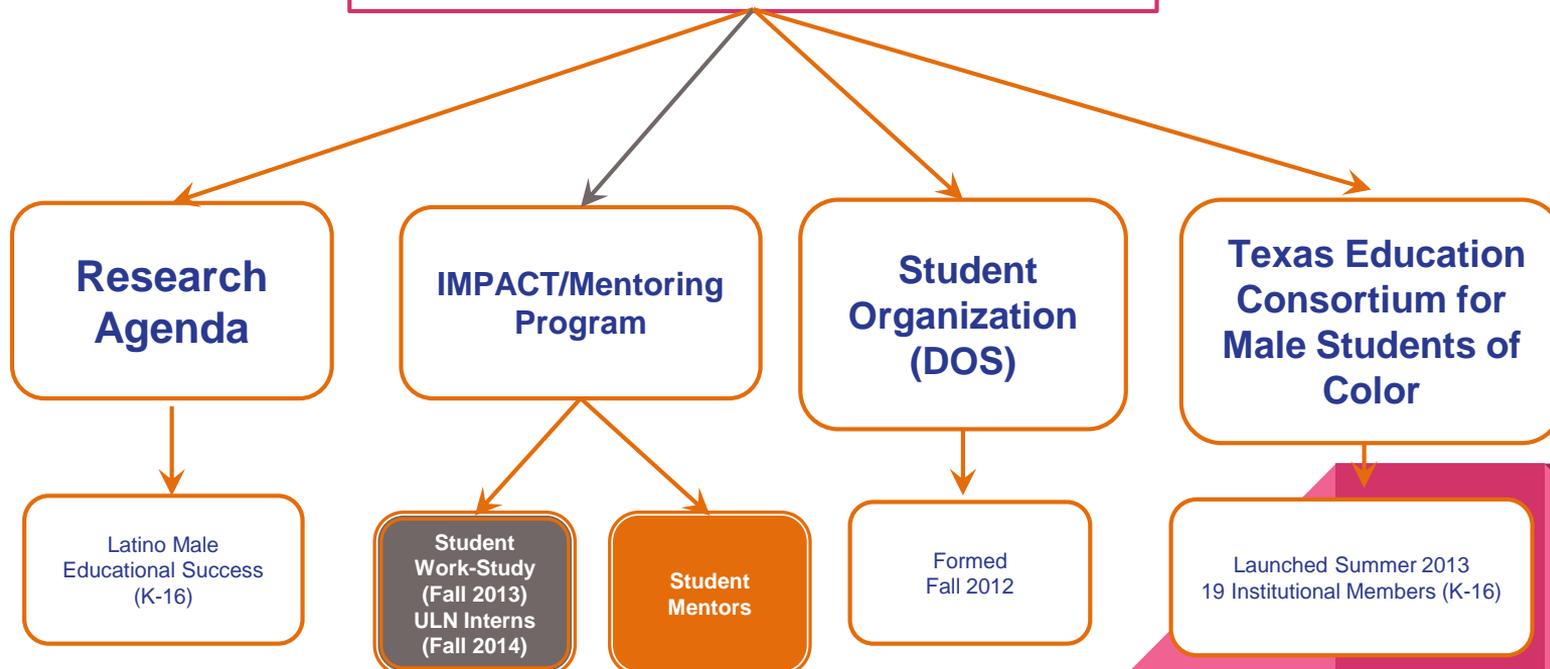
Latino male representation is lower than females. In Fall 2012, Latino males represented **6%** and females represented **8%** of the total undergraduate population

### Degree Attainment

Over half of Latino male adults (25 +) have completed some educational attainment. **32%** had a high school diploma, **6%** had an associate's degree, **10%** had a bachelor degree, and **4%** had an advanced degree



# What is Project MALES



# The Goals for Project MALES



Project **MALES**  
Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success



Develop a research-based mentoring program to advance the success of Latino males across the educational pipeline.



Increase year-to-year retention and graduation rates for Latino male students at UT-Austin.

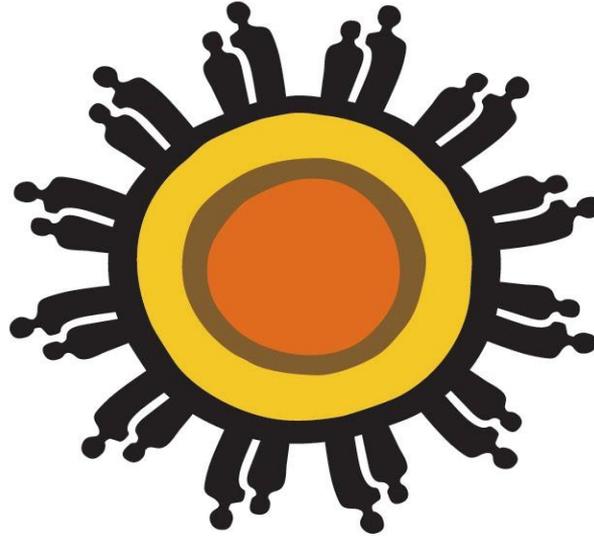


Provide a safe space and nurturing environment for Latino male students (and allies) at UT-Austin and beyond.

# Instructing Males through Peers Advising College Tracks

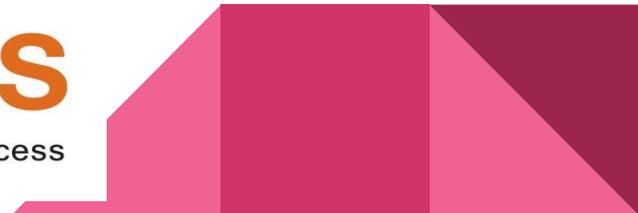


Project **MALES**  
Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success



# Project **MALES**

Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success



# Developing IMPACT

Personal schooling and educational experiences

Observations within our mentoring sites

Informal mentor/mentee feedback

Reference the literature on Latino males

Check-ins with mentors/mentee





# Examples of Weekly Lectures

Weeks 3-5 Mentoring Overview & Mentoring Men of Color

The Creation of A Latino Males Mentoring Program: Project MALES (Saenz, Ponjuan, Segovia, Del Real Viramontes, Forthcoming)

“The Value of Mentoring” ([mentoring.org](http://mentoring.org))

Weeks 6-7 Latin@s and Education & Latino Males and Education

American Schools and the Latino Experience (Gandara & Contreras, 2009)

The Vanishing Latino Male in Higher Education (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2008)



# Example of Weekly Lectures (Cont.)

## Weeks 8-9 Male Identity

Hyper-criminalization of Black and Latino Male Youth In An Era Of Mass Incarceration (Rios, 2006)

Racially Stigmatized Masculinities and Empowerment: Conceptualizing and Nurturing Latino Males' Schooling in the United States (Lopez, 2012)

## Weeks 10-11 Culture & Family

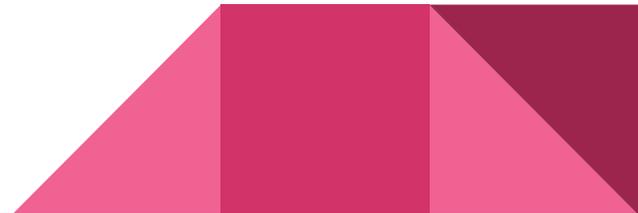
The Myth of the “Culture of Poverty” (Gorski, 2008).

From Barrios to Yale: The Role of Parenting in Latino Families (Ceballo, 2004)



# Sample Discussion Question

What does mentoring mean to you? For those of you who have mentored before, reflect back on your own experiences and discuss how that has impacted your view on the role of mentoring.



# Sample Class Activity

Divide the class into three groups of 5

Develop a skit that could highlight a mentoring scenario:

Academic issue

Peer network issue

Social justice issue

In your skit make sure to present the issue & how you would handle it in a real life situation with your mentee(s)

# Sample Class Activity

## Group Presentation

Students will be divided into groups of three to present a 15 minute class presentation on a topic of interest presented throughout the semester. This presentation should include at least two citations throughout the presentation in APA format. Although we want you all

## General Guidelines

We're looking for the following:

Was your presentation 15 minutes long?

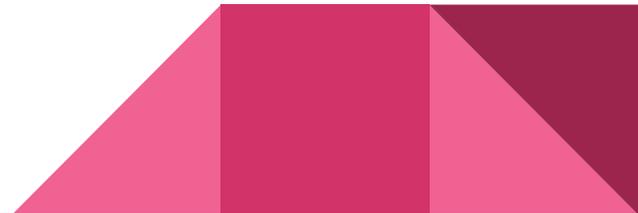
Did you cite two articles throughout your presentation in APA format?

Did you include an activity to engage your classmates?



# Student Reactions

“Throughout the semester, the readings and activities have covered valuable topics to better understand the needs of the populations we are working with and how to better fulfill them or understand them as mentors. The three main ideas that have stood out to me are the topics of in-school barriers, the hyper-criminalization of Latinos, and the role of la familia in education in combination with the myth of the culture of poverty. These ideas helped discuss the unique factors that students of color face and how it affects their educational pipeline.” (Project MALES, Student Mentor)





# Student Reactions (Cont.)

“I really appreciated last class and that you did a great job with the presentation on Tuesday...what you explained in class really stuck to me and I thought about it throughout the whole day. I had no idea that at a young age, students are already put into this "filter-like system" that determines their placing in the future. It is quite sad and unjust and shows that our nation's school system needs adjustments.”

“I also enjoyed how you showed the clip at the end of class. I honestly want to be a teacher after I graduate because I want Latino males to look up to me as a prime example why they can be successful, much like Mr. Escalante. The video showed exactly how his success came with the fact that he could relate to his own students. In high school, there was no male Latino I could look up to, but I want to change that for others.” (Project MALES, Student Mentor)

## How IMPACT impacts our Latino Undergraduates Educational Outcomes and Empowers Them

Helps our students integrate to campus life

Acknowledgement of struggles Latinos face in the community

Seeing Latinos as TA's / Professors

Recognition of privileges for continuing their education

Locating a support system on campus

Providing leadership development opportunities



# IMPACT Course Challenges

Creating a syllabus with meaningful and purposeful readings and activities

Creating a curriculum for our mentees

Student engagement

Time constraints





# Future of IMPACT

- **Expansion –**

- Freshman signature courses (UGS 302) are required courses as part of the university core degree requirements for graduation.
- We look forward to the possibility of expanding our 2-hour course and build towards establishing the service learning course as a full fledged class.





Project **MALES**  
Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success

# Project MALES Staff



**From L to R (back row): Dr. Victor Saenz, Jorge Segovia, Dr. Emmet Campos, DeAna McCusky, Juan Lopez, Dr. Luis Ponjuan; (L to R, front row): Dr. Veronica Jones, Leticia Palomin, Claudia Garcia Louis, Susana Hernandez**



Project **MALES**

Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success

# Thank You!

[projectmalesmentoring@gmail.com](mailto:projectmalesmentoring@gmail.com)

Find us on the web at:

<http://ddce.utexas.edu/projectmales/>

Like/follow us on Facebook and Twitter:

@ProjectMALES