Promoting and advancing social justice is an on-going process of reflection, unlearning, and action. Recently, it was brought to ODIEX’s attention that our office suite was inaccessible, lacking an automatic door opener. This was a shock. As an office devoted to diversity and inclusive excellence, disability is a critical part of our work, and yet here was complete oversight. Walking in and out of the office daily, it hadn’t occurred to me that this door was not accessible – evident of the privilege we all have in “not having to think about” things outside of our own experience.

Although I am embarrassed that I did not think about the accessibility of our physical office space, I am thankful to have had the opportunity to respond and to renew a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity through the process, including having Facilities Management install an automatic door opener. Moreover, this situation has prompted us to proactively plan for accessibility in our upcoming events and initiatives. For example, we have reserved an accessible bus, and have added language to our application and marketing that invites individuals to request disability-related accommodations. These are practices that we encourage for all event planners to ensure that our campus experiences are open and inclusive to more attendees.

Additionally, the whole situation led me to think of several other points that I would like to highlight.

First, ODIEX is the diversity office doing social justice work on the UA campus and yet we still sometimes fall short of meeting our ideals. Although we do try to respond to the experiences of our diverse campus and be as inclusive as possible, we are not infallible and need to hold ourselves accountable in those cases where we have made mistakes. It is not enough to move past mistakes if there is not a true commitment to doing better in the future.

Second, this situation made me reflect on other things that we might not have thought about, unintentionally excluding certain communities as a result. The business of Inclusive Excellence is constant and requires vigilance and attentiveness, and all of us working to embed diversity and inclusiveness into the university help.

Third, thanks to UA Disability Resource Center and their staff, we were able to obtain information and guidance for installing the accessible door. We highly recommend them for any challenges, opportunities, questions or information on disability or campus access. What a great campus resource!

Jesús Treviño, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence
Senior Diversity Officer

As you visit campus, be sure to speak a word of thanks to the Tohono O’odham and Pascua Yaqui people upon whose land we are guests here in Tucson. As guests and scholars we will build this community and continue the development of leaders for ‘Indian Country.”
The National Center for Interpretation (NCI)

The National Center for Interpretation (NCI) is a research and outreach unit at the University of Arizona charged with promoting intercultural communication and social justice for language minorities through cutting-edge research, training, and testing for interpreters and translators. One way it pursues that mission is by training interpreters who contribute to ensuring fair and equal access to justice, healthcare, education, and other major societal institutions for linguistic minorities. NCI’s flagship interpreter training program is its Court Interpreter Training Institute (CITI), which is an intensive summer institute for Spanish/English bilingual professionals focused on interpreting in legal settings. The annual 3-week CITI offers specialized training for professional and aspiring interpreters. In 2017, the CITI runs from July 3-21, M-F, 8am-5:30pm. For more information about NCI or its CITI, contact them at: ncitrp@email.arizona.edu or 520-621-3615.

Asian American Faculty, Staff, and Alumni Association (AAFSAA) 2017 Spring Luncheon

The AAFSAA had a wonderful luncheon to celebrate the year and the accomplishments of their faculty, staff and students. Provost Andrew Comrie provided a few words to the group. The luncheon was a success and a great way to bring the community together.
Each spring, the University of Arizona Honors College admits a cohort of highly-motivated students through its Self-Nomination process. This process provides a pathway into the Honors experience for current UA students who were not initially admitted to the Honors College. Students with demonstrated success at the University of Arizona and interest in the Honors College can attend information sessions about the benefits, requirements, and purpose of the Honors College, and then make an informed decision to join our Honors community. By allowing students to self-nominate, we aim to enrich our honors community, adding students who are passionate about making the most of their UA undergraduate experiences.

This spring, we approached the self-nomination process differently than in years past. The self-nomination process has always been very open, offering an alternate pathway into the Honors College to any student who was eligible and interested. This year we sought to make it a more active tool of inclusion and increasing diversity within our college. Our goal was to use our outreach efforts to broaden awareness about this pathway among students who come from groups underrepresented in our Honors population.

Our efforts to make the self-nomination process more open and inclusive included multiple changes aimed at accommodating a wide variety of student schedules and situations, and making an extra effort to connect them to important information about the process. This included:

- Planning for a large number of students to take advantage of the process, allowing for a broad outreach inviting students to self-nominate;
- Conducting 50% more large group information sessions about the process, allowing us to connect to a greater number of students;
- Ongoing outreach by the Student Success team to cultural and resource centers across campus in order to expand awareness of the self-nomination process.

To broaden our outreach and actively connect to students in underrepresented groups, we also transformed the way we invited students to take advantage of the self-nomination process. Though the process is open to all students who meet our specific set of requirements, we do targeted outreach to second semester freshmen. In the past, we have targeted students for invitation based on a purely academic calculation: which students have performed the absolute best during their first semester at the U of A (based on their GPA). This year, we made a change to this practice. Rather than basing our outreach on highest performance by GPA, we prioritized the utilization of the self-nomination process as a tool for growing diversity in the Honors College. In our outreach and invitations this semester, we actively targeted high performing students from diverse socioeconomic, ethnic, racial, and national backgrounds, utilizing as much data as possible from UAccess Analytics.

These efforts had a noticeable impact: our incoming self-nomination cohort this semester (approximately 175 students) was substantially more diverse on multiple measures than our Honors population overall and our admitted cohort from Fall 2016. This included a higher proportion of students of color (46%) and international students (18%), as well as substantially higher percentages of students from the Colleges of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Nursing, and Fine Arts, and the Eller College of Management. We strongly believe that the more diverse Honors community that results from changes like these creates a more robust Honors community, better poised to prepare our students for successful lives ahead.

By prioritizing students from underrepresented backgrounds in our outreach for this semester’s self-nomination process, we were able to admit a more diverse cohort of students than our existing Honors population and transform a passively open process into an actively inclusive one. This has helped to bring us closer to inclusive excellence in the Honors College. We look forward to discussions this summer on revising our self-nomination process even further, with inclusive excellence as a driving factor.

Thomas Sullivan
Senior Program Coordinator, Student Success
University of Arizona Honors College

1. These requirements include a cumulative UA GPA of 3.5 or above, at least 12 UA units completed, and at least three semesters remaining.
In Fall 2017, the Office for Diversity and Inclusive Excellence will be hosting our first UA Leadership Education and Ally Development Retreat (LEADR): A Multicultural Leadership for the 21st Century Training Initiative.

Preliminary Announcement: Save the Date
2017 LEADR
Friday, August 25, 2017 — Sunday, August 27, 2017
Triangle Y Ranch Camp, Oracle, AZ 85623

Come and experience two days of interactive diversity games and activities, team building, and cultural/group presentations designed to prepare you for leadership in a diverse world. The purpose of the retreat is to bring together UA undergraduate students in leadership positions for:

- two days of interactive training related to diversity concepts, knowledge, terms, and skill building
- networking and relationship building with other UA students
- increasing collaboration between student organizations on campus
- skill-building in the areas of intercultural communication, sharing diverse perspectives, critical-thinking, and civil discourse

We will be exploring topics such as: race and ethnicity, LGBTQIA+, disability, religion and worldviews, intersectionality, privilege and oppression, multicultural leadership, civil discourse, and many more!

For more information, please visit: http://diversity.arizona.edu/leadr/

UA policies governing student behavior will be enforced. Read more about UA policies and codes at: https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies-codes

Applications Available Summer 2017
Acceptance to the retreat is on a first come, first served basis.
Free for UA undergraduates includes meals, transportation and lodging

For the retreat, we will provide accessible transportation to and from the main UA campus. Attendees will be provided breakfast, lunch and dinner. Triangle Y will do their absolute best to accommodate students’ dietary needs, but students with significant restrictions may need to bring their own meals (refrigerators and microwaves will be available). Lodging includes all gender, male-specific, and female-specific options. There are ADA accessible lodges available.

Students, if you would like to be added to a list to receive the application, email Program Coordinator Sr. Charlinda Haudley at chaudley@email.arizona.edu. Any questions or concerns can be directed to Charlinda Haudley.
The UA Office for Diversity and Inclusive Excellence would like to say thank you to the student leaders who served on the ODIEX Student Advisory Board this semester. These students represented each cultural and resource center providing student voice and feedback to our signature programs and diversity related initiatives. We thank them for their time and feedback and we look forward to working with the new leadership for the 2017-2018 academic school year.

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<tr>
<th>Resource Center/ Cultural Center</th>
<th>Representative</th>
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<tr>
<td>Asian Pacific American Student Affairs Cultural Center</td>
<td>Kevin Vicencio&lt;br&gt;Kaitlin Huynh</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTQ Affairs Resource Center</td>
<td>Jacob Winkelman&lt;br&gt;Sabrina Etcheverry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women's Resource Center</td>
<td>Eva Ruiz&lt;br&gt;Nicole Morin</td>
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<td>Adalberto &amp; Ana Guerrero Student Center</td>
<td>Danae Meza&lt;br&gt;Lizbeth Flores</td>
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<tr>
<td>African American Student Affairs Cultural Center</td>
<td>Hassan Farah&lt;br&gt;Geonae Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Sorority and Fraternity Council</td>
<td>Teresita Sanchez&lt;br&gt;Araceli Islas</td>
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<td>Disability Resource Center</td>
<td>Alex Spartz&lt;br&gt;Tina Feldman&lt;br&gt;Steven Wilson</td>
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<td>Native American Student Affairs Cultural Center</td>
<td>Ariel Shirley&lt;br&gt;Soukey Keovorabouth</td>
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Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is a federally-recognized month for the commemoration and celebration of the contributions that Asian and Pacific Americans have made to society (Library of Congress). Asian/Pacific describes a broad geographical region that includes all of the Asian continent and the Pacific Islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia -- areas that have their own distinctive histories, languages, and cultures (Asian Pacific Heritage). This year’s theme is Uniting Our Voices by Speaking Together.

Congressional representatives first attempted to establish Asian Pacific American Heritage Week in 1977 with two different pieces of legislation: House Joint Resolution 540 and Senate Joint Resolution 72. Both of these bills, however, were rejected. Subsequently, in 1978, Representative Frank Horton (NY) proposed House Joint Resolution 1007, which was passed and established the first Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. The annual recognition was extended to a month-long commemoration in 1992 with the passing of Public Law 102-450 (Asian Pacific Heritage).

The month of May was selected based on two historical moments: the first influx of Japanese immigrants into the U.S. (May 7, 1843) and the completion of the transcontinental railroad (May 10, 1869) -- a dangerous project that was largely completed by Chinese immigrants, many of whom were injured or killed in the process (Asian Pacific Heritage). Since immigrating to the United States, many Asian and Pacific immigrants have faced restrictive laws, harsh discrimination, and even violence. For example, in the late 1880s anti-Chinese riots broke out in Chico, California and Rocks Spring, Wyoming to protest the rise in Eastern Asian immigration. During World War II, over 100,000 Japanese-American citizens were forced into internment camps mainly in response to the bombing of Pearl Harbor. In 1952, the McCarran-Walter Act eliminated race as a barrier to immigration, and the Immigration Act of 1990 “increased the number of Asians coming to the U.S. by raising the total quota and reorganizing the system of preferences to favor certain professional groups... [in] medicine, high technology, and other specialties” (Infoplease). Mostly as a result, the number of Asian immigrants has increased greatly, doubling from 5 million in 1990 to 10.6 million in 2009 (Infoplease). In spite of the facilitation of immigration for certain subsets of the community, however, the increase in Asian and Pacific American populations in the United States has also led to the perpetuation of the “Model Minority Myth” and the stereotype of Asian and Pacific Americans as “perpetual foreigners.” Check out this article by Everyday Feminism to learn more: http://everydayfeminism.com/2015/04/dismantle-model-minority-myth/

Here are just a few of many “firsts” by Asian and Pacific Americans:

• U.S. Representatives: Dalip Singh Saund (Indian-American) and Patsy Takemoto Mink (Japanese-American, from Hawaii)
• U.S. Senator: Mazie Hirono (Japanese-American, from Hawaii)
• Samoan-American in the Miss USA Pageant: Zina Pistor
• Network News Reporters: Ken Kashiwahara (Japanese-American, from Hawaii) and Connie Chung (Chinese-American)
• Native Hawaiian Woman to receive a PhD in Science: Isabella Kauakea Yau Yung Aiona Abbott (Native Hawaiian, Chinese-American)

Citations:
• http://asianpacificheritage.gov/about/
• https://www.loc.gov/law/help/commemorative-observations/asian.php
• https://www.infoplease.com/asian-american-history

Image Credit: Bulu Kava Blog
Jewish Heritage Month

Jewish Heritage Month is a federally-recognized month for the recognition and celebration of the contributions that Jewish Americans have made to the United States (Wikipedia). Beginning in 1981, Congress annually declared a week in April or March to be Jewish Heritage Week (Library of Congress). Jewish Heritage Month was officially established in 2006 by President George W. Bush alongside Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL), Senator Arlen Specter (PA), the Jewish Museum of Florida, and the South Florida Jewish Community (Wikipedia).

This year’s Jewish Heritage Month theme is “American Jews in Medical Research.” The following are three notable Jewish Americans recognized for their contributions to the field (biographies provided by Jewish American Heritage Month):

**Gertrude Elion, 1918-1999**
“Gertrude Elion’s exceptional accomplishments include the development of the first chemotherapy for childhood leukemia, the immunosuppressant that made organ transplantation possible, the first effective anti-viral medication, and treatments for lupus, hepatitis, arthritis, gout, and other diseases. With her research partner, George Hitchings, she revolutionized the way drugs were developed, and her efforts have saved or improved the lives of countless individuals. Elion stated: ‘It’s amazing how much you can accomplish when you don’t care who gets the credit!’... In 1964, Gertrude Elion received the first of her 25 honorary doctorates from George Washington University, and in 1988, Dr. Elion received the Nobel Prize in Medicine “for discoveries of important principles for drug treatment,” together with Dr. Hitchings and Sir James Black. Few Nobels have gone to scientists working in the drug industry or those without Ph.D.s, even fewer to women; Elion was only the fifth female Nobel laureate in Medicine, the ninth in science in general. Gertrude Elion was inducted into The Jewish-American Hall of Fame in 2011.”

**Jonas Salk, 1914-1995**
“Virologist Jonas Salk was born in New York to Russian-Jewish immigrants. In 1947, he accepted an appointment at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, where, working with the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, he launched his quest for a vaccine against polio, a virulent disease that primarily afflicted children. When news of his discovery of a vaccine was made public on April 12, 1955, Salk was hailed as a miracle worker. In 1963, he founded the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California, a center for medical and scientific research. Salk spent his last years searching for a vaccine against AIDS.”

**Marshall Warren Nirenberg, 1927-2010**
“Nirenberg was a biochemist and geneticist who received the 1968 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for describing the genetic code and how it operates in protein synthesis. Born in New York City, he developed an early interest in biology. He received a B.S. degree and master’s degree in zoology from the University of Florida, and a Ph.D. in biochemistry from the University of Michigan. In 1957, he began his postdoctoral work at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as a fellow of the American Cancer Society. He eventually studied the steps that relate DNA, RNA and protein, and his groundbreaking work led him to become the head of the Section of Biochemical Genetics in 1962. In addition to the Nobel Prize, Nirenberg received the National Medal of Science in 1966 and the National Medal of Honor in 1968. He was elected to the American Philosophical Society in 2001.”

Citations:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_American_Heritage_Month
Mass Incarceration

The United States currently incarcerates more people than any other nation in the world (EJI). According to a 2017 Report, the U.S. criminal justice system currently holds more than 2.3 million people in 1719 state prisons, 102 federal prisons, 942 juvenile corrective facilities, 3283 local jails, and 79 Indian county jails in addition to military prisons, immigration detention centers, civil commitment centers, and prisons in U.S. territories (Prison Policy). These statistics become even more striking when one considers those outside of detention that are still under the purview of the criminal justice system. In total, nearly 7 million people in the U.S. are incarcerated, on probation, or on parole (EJI).

Immense amounts of research have been performed on what is often referred to as mass incarceration in the United States. Some have taken a historical approach, considering the development of our current criminal justice system. In the 1960s, the United States’ incarceration rates were on par with those in Europe; however beginning in the 1970s, there was a massive spike in numbers that can be largely attributed to “tough-on-crime” policies (AJ+). In 1971, President Richard Nixon began the War on Drugs campaign (Reading). Today, nearly half a million people are incarcerated for a non-violent drug offense.

The War on Drugs and its legacy has disproportionately impacted communities of color, especially Black and Latino men. This is not because these communities use drugs more than White folks. For example, even though Black and White people have been found to use drugs at the same rate, Black men are 12x more likely to be imprisoned than White men for a drug offense (Prison Policy). Instead, the disparity largely is rooted in bias, profiling, and other systemic inequalities. The 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act is a poignant example. According to the policy, possession of only 5 grams of crack (in comparison to 500 grams of cocaine) resulted in a mandatory sentence of five years without parole. This discrepancy in regulation of drug quantity is significant given that crack is more likely to be used by Black people whereas cocaine is more likely to be used by White people (Reading). While this 100:1 felony drug quantity disparity between crack and cocaine was reduced to 18:1 by the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010, bias still remains (Wikipedia). Reading notes that members of marginalized communities are more likely to be involved in the drug trade because it is a steady source of attainable income for communities that are impacted by poverty and inadequate educational resources, systemic inequalities that go unaddressed in favor of increased criminalization. Ultimately, the system becomes a sort of cycle: upon release, those who had been incarcerated for a felony (or even a misdemeanor in some cases) are much less likely to find legal employment, forcing those formerly convicted to turn back to criminalized practices like the drug trade and sex work. Equally striking is the stagnation of “tough-on-crime” policies, which likely is impacted by disenfranchisement and the fact that those most affected by such policies are unable to vote. In all 50 states, citizens who are convicted of a felony are ineligible to vote, a staggering 5.8 million Americans. Again, this disproportionately impacts some communities more than others, with 1 in 13 African Americans being denied the right to vote. Scholars such as Michelle Alexander have accordingly considered the ways in which mass incarceration functions as “the New Jim Crow.”
Mass Incarceration

The impacts of racial injustice in relation to mass incarceration are compounded by other factors as well. The **school-to-prison pipeline** describes the increased securitization of public schools and the rise in “zero-tolerance policies” (ACLU). This trend disproportionately impacts Black and Latinx students, who comprise 70% of in-school-related arrests or referrals to law enforcement (Reading). Currently, about 34,000 youth are incarcerated in the U.S., and of that group 7,000 are imprisoned for “technical violations” of the requirements of their probation rather than for having committed any further offenses. An additional 600 youth are incarcerated for “status offenses,” which are “behaviors that are not law violations for adults, such as running away, truancy, and incorrigibility” (Prison Policy). According to Reading, public schools are using their resources to increase the number of police officers in schools rather than to increase the number of support staff and resources for youth, including those affected by disabilities, poverty, abuse, and/or neglect (Reading, ACLU).

Similarly, the lack of adequate mental health and substance abuse related care in the U.S. likely contributes to high incarceration rates. Just about half of all those incarcerated suffer from mental health issues, with 10-25% of prisoners having “severe” conditions such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. There are also extremely high rates of drug and alcohol dependence among those that are incarcerated. Because of the lack of healthcare and recovery options available inside and outside of prisons, many people with mental illnesses and/or histories of substance abuse wind up reoffending and becoming incarcerated yet again (Reading).

Recent studies have also found that queer people are disproportionately incarcerated, especially QTPOC (queer trans people of color). 1,882 per 100,000 lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are incarcerated in comparison to 612 per 100,000 heterosexual U.S. residents (Stemple and Meyer). Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are even more likely to be arrested and incarcerated, especially those engaging in survival crimes such as sex work due to employment discrimination (NCTE). Trans and queer folks are more likely to be subject to abuse and violence in prisons, especially transgender women, who are 13x more likely to be sexually assaulted than cisgender women while incarcerated (Stemple and Meyer, Reading). Many trans people are forced into prison settings that do not align with their gender identity, placing them at increased risk. Others are placed into solitary confinement for the “protection” of themselves and other inmates -- an action that has been recognized as cruel and unusual punishment (NCTE).

In spite of immense efforts by prison reform and justice activists, the rates of mass incarceration and its systemic underpinnings continue to rise. This has in part been attributed to the **privatization of prisons** operated by for-profit corporations, which have increased from 5 in 1998 to 100 in 2008. Profits for such corporations have increased 500% over the last 20 years, providing a huge monetary incentive to keep more and more people locked up (EJI).
Mass Incarceration

Recommended Readings/Films

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* - Michelle Alexander

*Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, and Torture* - Angela Y. Davis

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X* - Malcolm X and Alex Haley

*13TH* (film) - Ava DuVernay

*The Classroom and The Cell: Conversations on Black Life in America* - Marc Lamont Hill and Mumia Abu-Jamal


*From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* - Elizabeth Kai Hinton

“A Black Body on Trial: The Conviction of HIV-Positive ‘Tiger Mandingo’” - Steven Thrasher

Organizations to Support/Get Involved with to Fight Prison Injustice

**The Audre Lorde Project:** Runs the Safe OUTside the System (SOS) Collective, an anti-violence program led by and in support of QTPOC to challenge “hate and police violence by using community based strategies rather than relying on the police”

**Black and Pink:** Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and allies working together in mutual support, including an on-going pen pal project

**AZ Justice Project:** an organization that seeks justice for the innocent, wrongfully imprisoned, marginalized, and forgotten in the AZ Criminal Justice System

**Coalición de Derechos Humanos:** a grassroots organization promoting human rights and justice for those living in the Southern Border region, U.S. and non-U.S. citizens alike

**Fuerza! Coalition:** organization that fights back against the prison industry’s attacks against communities in Tucson

**Private Corrections Institute:** “watchdog” organization working to stop the spread of private, for-profit prisons

**Stop Mass Incarceration Network:** initiated by Dr. Cornel West and Carl Dix to resist mass incarceration and police violence against Black, Latinx, and other oppressed peoples

**The Sentencing Project:** organization working for a fair and effective U.S. criminal justice system by promoting reforms in sentencing policies, addressing unjust racial disparities and practices, and advocating for alternatives to incarceration

Citations

https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2016.html

http://eji.org/mass-incarceration


http://everydayfeminism.com/2014/08/us-prison-system/

https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline


http://www.transequality.org/issues/police-jails-prisons

May 2017
Immigration

Check out the UA’s Immigrant Student Resource Center and their Wildcat UndocuPeers Training Sessions for steps towards allyship:
www.eao.arizona.edu/isrc/immigrant-student-resource-center/

Terminology

Cultural citizenship: used to describe undocumented people who take part in the class, cultural, and linguistic knowledge and skills that establish the cultural capital of social groups in the U.S.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA): establishes that certain individuals who arrive in the U.S. as children may request consideration of deferred action for a period of two years, subject to renewal, and would then be eligible for work authorization. The Secretary of Homeland Security makes these determinations on a case-by-case basis.

DREAMer: refers to undocumented students who benefit from the DREAM Act. DREAMer is commonly used by students who connect with the DREAM Act movement as a way to navigate away from the negative connotations given to terms such as undocumented, immigrant, and non-U.S. citizen.

Illegal: a racially charged slur used to dehumanize and discriminate against immigrants and people of color regardless of migratory status. The word is shorthand for “illegal alien,” “illegals,” and other harmful terms. The Applied Research Center (ARC) and Colorlines.com have presented the Drop the I-Word campaign to eradicate the slur from everyday use and public discourse.

Mixed-Status Family: families in which one or more members are undocumented. It is important to know this information because it may affect the way a student fills out their FAFSA.

Overstayed visa: refers to individuals who have stayed in the U.S. after their tourist, visitor, or student visa has expired

Undocumented student: refers to students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents, do not hold a visa, or have not applied for legal residency

Source: University of San Francisco, Task Force to Support Undocumented Students

Recommended Readings/Films

Chicano! History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement (film) - Hector Galen

Deported: Immigrant Policing, Disposable Labor and Global Capitalism - Tanya Maria Golash-Boza

Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms - Inderpal Grewal

Elsewhere, Within Here: Immigration, Refuge-ism, and the Boundary Event - Trinh T. Minh-ha

GLQ Queer/Migration Issue - edited by Eithne Luibheid

American Dreaming: Immigrant Life on the Margins - Sarah Mahler

Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America - Mae M. Ngai

Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects - Bayoumi Moustafa

Image Credit: Ozmet Law
Immigration

According to the 2016 Current Population Survey, immigrants and first-generation American children comprise approximately 27% of the overall U.S. population (about 84.3 million people) (Migration Policy). In spite of these large numbers and the fact that the United States has long celebrated its scripting as a “melting pot,” in actuality this rhetoric of inclusion and valuation of diversity is quite contrary to current immigration policies. More often than not, biases about who is an “ideal” immigrant often function across the intersections of race, gender, religion, and class, impacting citizenship, asylum, and deportation policies as well as affecting the social treatment of immigrants in the U.S.

There are a lot of myths in circulation about immigration in the U.S. that activists have efforted to debunk. For example, when most people in the U.S. hear the word “immigration,” they automatically think of Mexican emigration and migration, given the government and media’s fierce attention to Southern border politics. That said, while Mexicans account for the largest percent (27%) of the immigration population, about 58% of folks emigrate from India, China (including Hong Kong), the Phillipines, El Salvador, Vietnam, Cuba, the Domican Republic, Korea, and Guatemala (Migration Policy). In 2016, 84,994 refugees were also admitted into the United States, primarily from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Syria, Myanmar, Iraq, Somalia, Bhutan, Iran, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Eritrea.

Of these groups, 7.9 million people from Mexico and Central America, 1.5 million people from Asia, 673,000 people from South America, 432,000 people from Europe, Canada, and Oceania, 353,000 people from Africa, and 232,000 people from the Caribbean are currently undocumented with very few avenues for changing their authorization status (Migration Policy). That said, another common myth about immigrants is that most “cross the border” without authorization. More often than not, this is not the case. About 40% of immigrants who become undocumented enter the United States with authorization via airplane, and many others drive into the U.S. (also with authorization). In fact, many of those who are currently undocumented lose their authorized status because of overstaying a tourist, visitor, or student visa (Palaez Lopez). In spite of these realities, many immigrants -- especially Mexican immigrants -- are portrayed as inherently criminal and are treated as such, revealing more about racism in the United States than about those who are negatively impacted by these stereotypes.

Migration is a symptom of inhumane, imperialistic, and colonialist U.S. foreign policy and the militaristic, unilateral, and hawkish ways the U.S. has interacted with – and continues to interact with – the world. In order to champion immigrant rights, we must address the root causes of oppression that lead one to leave their home and culture. What is most surprising is that those same push factors of migration – that is, Islamophobia, the War on Terror, the War on Drugs, money in politics, the carceral state, and climate change – are all elements of foreign policy that affect people in the U.S. and abroad. Please note each of the push factors mentioned above disproportionately affects immigrants, people of color, and transgender and queer folks.

Catalina Velasquez. Everyday Feminism

Image Credit: Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy
Catalina Valasquez, an undocumented transgender Colombian, describes many of the challenges faced by undocumented communities in the U.S.:

1. To be undocumented is to understand the misplaced resources from the federal government that focus on creating detention centers as opposed to community centers.

2. To be undocumented is to be told that unless you speak fluent English with a U.S. accent, your voice means nothing, and your thoughts and opinions are disregarded.

3. To be undocumented is to live in fear, while yearning to be visible outside of underground economies or capitalist systems that perpetuate labor abuse.

4. To be undocumented is to know that healthcare is a luxury, and one that is barely available to us.

5. To be undocumented is to have people making money out of our stories and speaking for us rather than creating space for us to speak on behalf of ourselves.

6. To be undocumented is to see human rights as abstract concepts and our dignity and humanity as negotiating pieces in U.S. politics.

7. To be undocumented is to drive to a hospital or school while terrified of being stopped, detained, and deported.

8. To be undocumented is to be seen with suspicion and demonized by U.S. media and nativist politicians that run their campaigns on toxic American exceptionalism and racist platforms.

9. To be undocumented in this country is to be one of 11.2 million, which exceeds the population of Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Tunisia.

10. To be undocumented is to fear deportation that could lead to a death sentence.

11. To be undocumented is to believe that your basic human needs (that is, healthcare, employment, schooling, and housing) are wrong and justify U.S. citizens labelling you as social parasites.

12. To be undocumented is to be forced into perpetual gratitude towards the U.S. government even though it’s the same government that forced you to migrate in the first place.

13. To be undocumented is to have your life’s worth reduced to human capital and productivity.
Activities

Cultural Cuisines

The First Nations Development Institute is a Native American-run organization committed to strengthening Native American communities and economies. One of their many initiatives is called “Nourishing Native Foods & Health,” which is dedicated to improving Native American families’ access to healthy food thereby increasing food security and improving health and well-being.

According to Michael Roberts (Tlingit), president of First Nations, “There is a major shift occurring in Indian County as Native people are producing their own traditional foods on their own lands to sustain themselves, their families and their communities.”

First Nations offers examples of these recipes: www.firstnations.org/recipes#B

Check out First Nations and how to support their work if you are interested in their projects!

Fixing Sex: Intersex, Medical Authority, and Lived Experience - Katrina Karkazis

“Over the past decade intersex advocates have mounted unprecedented challenges to treatment, offering alternative perspectives about the meaning and appropriate medical response to intersexuality and driving the field of those who treat intersex conditions into a deep crisis. Katrina Karkazis offers a nuanced, compassionate picture of these charged issues in Fixing Sex, the first book to examine contemporary controversies over the medical management of intersexuality in the United States from the multiple perspectives of those most intimately involved” (Duke University Press).

Decolonizing Native Histories: Collaboration, Knowledge, and Language in the Americas - Florencia E. Mallon

“Decolonizing Native Histories is an interdisciplinary collection that grapples with the racial and ethnic politics of knowledge production and indigenous activism in the Americas. It analyzes the relationship of language to power and empowerment, and advocates for collaborations between community members, scholars, and activists that prioritize the rights of Native peoples to decide how their knowledge is used. The contributors—academics and activists, indigenous and nonindigenous, from disciplines including history, anthropology, linguistics, and political science—explore the challenges of decolonization” (Duke University Press).

Recommended Readings

May 2017

Paris Is Burning

The 1990 documentary film Paris Is Burning chronicles ball culture in New York City QTPOC communities during the 1980s. The film includes footage and interviews with some of the most prominent members of the drag scene, including Pepper LaBeija, Dorian Corey, Angie Xtravaganza, and Willi Ninja. In addition to celebrating developments such as the origins of “voguing,” the film also indexes the racism, queerphobia, and poverty experienced by the communities involved in ball culture, as well as their experience of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Last year (2016), Paris Is Burning was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress to recognize its cultural, historic, and aesthetic significance.

Source: www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris_Is_Burning_(film)
Upcoming Events

May 2017 Holidays

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
Older Americans Month
Jewish American Heritage Month

May 5: Cinco de Mayo
May 10/11 (sunset): Lailat al Bara’a
May 10: Vishaka puja (Buddha Day)
May 17: International Day Against Homophobia
May 21: World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
May 27: Ramadan begins
May 29: Memorial Day

“The Origin and Future of Mescal” - Ana G. Valenzuela Zapata
Wednesday, May 3, 12:00 pm
ENR2, Agnes Nelmes Haury lecture hall

Lotería Con La Jotería
Thursday, May 4, 5:00-6:30 pm
Cesar Chavez Rm 205

“Embodying Soundscapes: Explorations in Palestinian Hip Hop” - Alex Karaman
Thursday, May 4, 6:00 pm
Playground Bar & Lounge, 278 E. Congress St.

Cultural Splash
Friday, May 5, 5:00 - 9:00 pm
UA Mall

Native American Student Affairs Graduate Convocation
Friday, May 5, 5:00 - 8:00 pm
Student Union Memorial Center, North Ballroom

Rainbow Graduation:
Saturday, May 6, 4:00-6:00 pm
The Gallagher Theatre

Lotus Laureate Graduate Convocation
Saturday, May 6, 5:30-8:30 pm
South Ballroom SUMC

WOW Book Fiesta: A Story Journey to India
Saturday, May 6, 10:00 am
College of Education, Rm. 453

African American Student Affairs Graduation Convocation
Tuesday, May 09, 5:30 pm
Student Union Memorial Center, South Ballroom

Guerrero Student Center Graduation Ceremony
Wednesday, May 10, 5:30-7:30 pm
Centennial Hall

UA Commencement
Friday, May 12, 7:30 pm
Arizona Stadium

Diversity Task Force Meeting
Monday, May 15, 9:00 am
Old Main, Silver and Sage Rm.