

## 2011-12 UPD Application

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The (Leaking) Educational Pipeline for Undocumented Latino Students

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COAS

SOCIOLOGY

Rank: Associate Professor      Tenture/TTrack      Lecturer:

Year appointed to TT: 2003

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Name::2:

Rank:      Tenture/TTrack      Lecturer:

Year appointed to T

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Name::3:

Rank:      Tenture/TTrack

3:Year appointed to TT:

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**Total funds requested**      **7000**      Types of funds: Both/either UPD and RSC

Do you have other support for this project: **No**      Amount

Source of support:

Have you submitted or do you plan to submit this proposal to **No**      Amount requested:

Funding source:

Have you received a University Professional Development Grant In the past 3 years: **Yes**

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### Description-Outcomes-relevance

**INTRODUCTION** I am applying for a course release to begin writing a book on undocumented Latino youth. During my sabbatical, my research assistants and I have been interviewing elementary, middle, high school, and community college undocumented Latino students (2010-2011). Previously, we interviewed 20 undocumented Latino university students which resulted in a publication (Clark-Ibañez et al., In Press). Our aim has been to understand the experiences, challenges, strategies and strengths of undocumented Latinos in the educational pipeline, k â€“ 16. We will complete data collection for the entire pipeline by Summer 2011. With a course release, I will write a book proposal and begin a book manuscript. We developed a distinct approach of capturing the students' experiences. For the elementary and middle school population, we utilized photo-elicitation interviews where the child takes photos of their everyday life and the researcher uses those photos as a basis of the interview (Clark-Ibañez 2004, 2007, 2008). For high school, community college, and university students we conducted in-depth, qualitative interviews. The rich nature of the students' stories â€“ and that they span across grade levels â€“ yield a compelling narrative and social snapshot of current education and immigration policies.

**CONTEXT** In the United States there are over 12 million undocumented immigrants. There about 1.8 million undocumented youth under 18 years: 80,000 are in the high school age range and there are approximately 65,000 college students (Immigration Policy Center 2008). Because of Plyer v. Doe (1982), undocumented students have a legal right to attend public education. Yet, many possess few formal financial resources and precarious citizenship status. In terms of education, the undocumented students share characteristics with Latino students who are citizens, students of color, and poor or working class students. Mainly, there are leaks in the educational pipeline for these historically underrepresented groups. Nineteen percent of Latinos do not graduate high school, compared to 5 percent white and 10 percent African-American students (Department of Education, 2006). Undocumented Latino students across the pipeline are particularly vulnerable because of their immigration status. On average, this population faces numerous hardships and challenges that are related to being low-income (Ruiz-Casares et al. 2009, Seif 2004), newly immigrated (Goodwin 2002), and being isolated from many of the social services that are available to children who are low-income in similar situations (Schwartz and Stiefel 2004). In addition, research finds that undocumented youth are negatively affected by frequent changes in residence and crowded housing environments (Perez et al. 2009), health care access (Ruiz-Casares 2010), future substance abuse (Bredenkamp and Copple 1997), and mental health ailments (Abrego 2008). Research also finds that the combination of all these challenges negatively affect their schooling experiences (Albo Carabelli 2009; Goodwin 2002; Schwartz and Stiefel 2004).

**RELEVANCE TO THE FIELD OF SOCIOLOGY** This project has a number of contributions to the field of Sociology. First, in preliminary analysis the concept of social capital seems to be key to understanding the students' experiences. Our data will be used to bring the theoretical discussion of social capital to all stages of education. Second, previous research has found that students exist in the â€œshadowsâ€ of their community (Abrego 2008, Martinez-CalderÃn 2009, Peguero 2009). However, we found a subset of the population who vocally advocate for the rights of immigrants and emerge from the shadows (Clark-IbÃ±ez et al. in press). Third, the sociological notion of â€œstatusesâ€ takes a major role in how the participants experience their personal and academic lives. The participants operate in multiple and conflicting statuses. For example, the participants are in subordinate statuses â€“ that of â€œchildâ€ (or youth) and â€œundocumented immigrant.â€ They are also in â€œliminalâ€ status â€“ they are here in the United States and yet do not have citizenship nor do many remember life before coming to the United States. Many of the participants explained this â€œin betweenâ€ status as â€œWe are not considered Americans but this is all I knowâ€, â€œI don't know anyone or anything about Mexicoâ€, and â€œI feel American but I also don't feel welcome.â€ Further data analysis will be conducted when we complete interviewing. I hope to offer one of the few studies that explores how undocumented immigrant youth understand their own lives

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and does so in a meaningful, theoretically rich way. **OUTCOMES** While research is growing in this field, there is not a single research study that has qualitatively examined how students experience their status in terms of schooling, challenges, and aspirations across the pipeline. The most comprehensive studies about Latino undocumented students are quantitative studies. While current data tell us much about the contributing factors to educational success and trends across groups, I hope to fill in this gap by producing a book manuscript that provides an in-depth perspective on this population. As the immigration debates continue and the educational system is under attack, the plight of undocumented Latino students intersects the areas of policy, law, social justice, and opportunity through the lens of educational setting. **CONCLUSION** Some of us Sociologists operate as "lone wolves" or in a small "wolf packs" because we conduct research quietly and on our own without the benefit of large grants or lab space. This study has been fueled by a UPD grant (09-10) and human capital. In particular, the project has been a research training and mentoring opportunity for 17 undergraduate, graduate and recently graduated CSUSM students. Through this collaborative effort, I hope to produce an academic yet accessible book that can do justice to the participants' hopes, dreams, and sorrows.

### Components-Activities

Building up to Spring 2012, I plan to spend Summer and Fall 2011 analyzing the interview and photography data. This is important work that will set the foundation for writing in spring semester.

For my Spring 2012 course release, I plan to spend 16 hours per week (8 hours for 2 days) on writing. My goal is to write two chapters and a book proposal by the end of the semester. (Two sample chapters are typically needed to send in with the book proposal.) My activities will also entail communicating with potential publishers "four of whom are already familiar with my work" to increase the chances of obtaining a book contract. Chapter One introduces the concept of the leaking educational pipeline for undocumented Latino students. The reader will learn about the social, political, and educational plight of the participants in the study. It will also include, in layperson's terms, the social context and the methodology. In equally approachable writing style, I will provide a brief overview of what other studies have discovered about this population. Finally, I conclude with a description of the logic and outline of the following chapters. The second chapter that I will write in the Spring will be a substantive chapter that includes data analysis. As mentioned, the pipeline includes elementary, middle, and high school interviews along with interviews with community college and 4-year university students. I envision chapters dedicated to each stage in the pipeline. I will know which chapter to write after data analysis is completed in Summer and Fall 2011. A book proposal usually has three components. There is a narrative which includes the purpose of the book, the comparative market for such a book, and potential audiences (academic/teaching uses for the book). A comprehensive book chapter outline is also usually required. Finally, I will include a curriculum vitae. The course release is necessary for Spring 2012 because it will help me carve out the necessary time needed to begin the writing process. In the following year (2012-2013), I will write subsequent chapters and revise accordingly; this will be accomplished between teaching, grading, mentoring, thesis supervision, service to the university and Sociology, etc. A solid beginning in the early stage of writing will create the book's structure and obtaining a book contract will be the motivation to persevere.

### Timeline:

I work best (and am the most productive) with a highly structured work schedule. Here is my time line for Spring 2012:

Week 1: Begin writing introduction chapter

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Week 2: Continue writing introduction chapter

Week 3: Revise introduction chapter

Week 4: Begin writing a substantive chapter

Week 5: Continue writing substantive chapter

Week 6: Revise substantive chapter

Week 7: Send chapters to colleagues for feedback; begin book proposal packet; obtain publishers' book specific proposal guidelines

Week 8: Write narrative for book proposal

Week 9: Continue to write narrative

Week 10: Finish writing narrative; send narrative to colleagues for feedback

Week 11: Write chapter outlines for book proposal

Week 12: Finish writing chapter outlines; send to colleagues for feedback

Week 13: Make changes to the book chapters suggested by colleagues

Week 14: Make changes to book proposal suggested by colleagues

Week 15: Complete all final revisions; revise c.v.

Week 16: Finalize the format, style, etc. for the book proposals; gather all materials needed to send proposals; send out book proposal and two chapters.

### Enhance Professional Growth

The time to write and obtain a book contract is central to my professional growth. I plan to go up for Full Professor in 2014-2015 and the book will be one of the major publications I plan to present in my promotion dossier. Previously, work with the student researchers had contributed to my goals as a mentor and publication activity. Upon my return from sabbatical, I hope to be an active participant in the university's initiative for undergraduate research (CUGR or Committee on Undergraduate Research). In terms of the current use of students, the data collection and analysis portion of this project has been highly collaborative with student researchers. A few students have expressed interest in helping draft chapters and research current statistics; they will be welcome and included in the process. However, I anticipate the final writing stage will primarily be a solitary undertaking. I wish to further elaborate on the previous mentoring of students. For my sabbatical project, we met as a group for 3 hours on Monday nights for 6 weeks and then they did independent work (along with meeting with me individually or in small groups). I created a 3-month training session where student researchers underwent rigorous training in the ethics, learned about qualitative methods, and read extensively on the research studies about undocumented students. They participated in creating and revising the interview questions along with all the protocols for the various educational levels in our study. Also, they conducted and transcribed their interviews. I supervised all their work and offered detailed feedback in person, in small group meetings, and large group sessions. Before each student researcher began their interviews, I met with her or him for a minimum of one hour in person or on the phone to go over the procedures for the study. I structured a research experience where the student researchers were able to experience many dimensions of intellectual work: the excitement of idea building, the preparatory work of interview questions, the frustrations of recruiting participants, the honor and responsibility of having someone share sensitive and sometimes very painful information about themselves, the joy of doing an interview, the drudgery of transcribing, and the awe that the interviews connect with one another and with previous studies.

### Supplies

n/a

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### Travel

Registration:	n/a	Mileage:Travel::
Lodging:		Auto Rental:
Air:		Parking:
Per diem:		Other:

### Consultants:

n/a

### Student Assistants:

n/a

### Other:

n/a

**Faculty Assigned Time** 4 units (most courses in Sociology are 4 units) \$7000.00

Budget justification:

As mentioned above, the only budget item asked for in this grant is a course release for Spring 2012 so that I can have the time to launch the book project.