

UCLA

College | Social Sciences

**César E. Chávez Department of Chicana/o
and Central American Studies**



25th Annual Commencement

*Celebrating 25 years of
community and scholarship*

The César E. Chávez Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies at UCLA acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands). As a land grant institution, we pay our respects to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), 'Ahihirom (Elders) and 'Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging.

CÉSAR E. CHÁVEZ DEPARTMENT OF
CHICANA/O AND CENTRAL AMERICAN STUDIES



COMMENCEMENT

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 2025

10:00 AM

COVEL COMMONS

PROGRAM

PROCESSIONAL

Faculty Marshals

Floralma Boj Lopez, Assistant Professor

Yessica Garcia Hernandez, Assistant Professor

GREETINGS

Charlene Villaseñor Black, Professor and Chair

BIENVENIDA EN ESPAÑOL

Kency Cornejo, Associate Professor

DOCTORAL STUDENT ROLL CALL

Class of 2025 Ph.D. Graduates

MASTER'S STUDENT ROLL CALL

Class of 2025 M.A. Graduates

BACHELOR OF ARTS STUDENT ROLL CALL

Class of 2025 Undergraduates

CONGRATULATORY & CLOSING REMARKS

Charlene Villaseñor Black, Professor and Chair

RECESSIONAL

Faculty and Graduates

GROUP PICTURE

Class of 2025

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Dear Chicana/o and Central American Studies Graduates,

I am delighted as Department Chair to offer my congratulations to all of you on this important occasion: Congratulations! ¡Felicidades! We are honored to have been witness to your intellectual accomplishments, hard work, creativity, and resilience. Your insights, questions, and opinions have contributed so much to our community and our lives these past years. We know that you will take these lessons out into the world and make it a better place for all.

Today, you are graduating from the #1 Public University in the US, and from the leading Chicana/o and Central American Studies Department in the country. This is no ordinary department. It was founded thirty-two years ago, in 1993, after a historic 14-day hunger strike led by students. Ninety-nine students were arrested for civil disobedience in order for us to be able to research, study, and honor our histories and

communities. What we do here in CCAS could not be more important in today's world. As we face political attacks against our communities, and threats to our legal protections, freedom of speech, education, and health care, may we remember what we learned here in Chicana/o and Central American Studies. We have the tools and critical thinking to fight back to ensure a more just future for us, our families, and communities.

Your brilliance and spirit and commitment to bettering our world inspire all of us in the César E. Chávez Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies at UCLA. We are honored to celebrate with you and inspired by your accomplishments. May the joy we all feel in this moment become a force for radical transformation in our personal lives, with our families, and in our communities!

Please stay in touch with us! Feel free to drop by, reach out, follow us on social media, and become an active part of our growing, powerful alumni network. We want to hear about how your education in Chicana/o and Central American Studies helps you in your future endeavors. Feel free to send us feedback and help us continue our commitment to knowledge in service of social justice.

¡FELICIDADES!

Charlene Villaseñor Black

Professor and Chair, UCLA César E. Chávez Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies

Professor, UCLA Art History

Ph.D. GRADUATES

Doctor of Philosophy in Chicana/o Studies

Isabel Coatlicue Durón

Contemporary Coloniality in Los Angeles: Colonial Logics, Art, & Public Space



Isabel C. Durón is the Operations & Great Wall Research Director at the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), an arts non-profit. Isabel's doctoral dissertation entitled "Contemporary Coloniality in Los Angeles: Colonial Logics, Art, and Public Space" examines Los Angeles as an on-going site of colonialism, and uplifts Tongva and community activists work that speak back to coloniality.

Gabriela Rodriguez-Gomez

Murals Without Walls, Muralism Without Borders: Womxn Artists and Their Portable Murals of the Chicano Art Movement in Colorado and California



Gabriela Rodriguez-Gomez is a social art historian specializing in the history of Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x murals in the U.S. and the mural movement in México. She holds a B.A. in Art and History of Art and Visual Culture from the University of California Santa Cruz, an M.A. in Art History from the University of California Riverside, and an M.A. in Chicana/o Studies from UCLA.

Ph.D. GRADUATES

Doctor of Philosophy in Chicana/o Studies

Iris Milagro Ramirez

Economies of Sacrifice: Labor, Migration, Survival, and Hope among Central American and Mexican Immigrants in Los Angeles Garment Work



Iris Milagro Ramirez is a Salvadoran scholar and incoming Ethnic Studies instructor at Butte College. Her work in Central American Studies honors her mother's experience as a garment worker and uplifts the stories of those fighting systemic inequality for their families' futures.

Joana Chavez Villarruel

Corrective Gendered Spaces: Testimonios from Young Women of Color in Group Homes



Joana Chavez Villarruel is an interdisciplinary feminist scholar and incoming Feminist and Gender Studies Assistant Professor at Colorado College. Her research centers testimonios to amplify the voices of young women of color in carceral spaces. She is deeply committed to abolishing violent systems that harm and marginalize communities of color.

M.A. GRADUATES

Master of Arts in Chicana/o Studies

Darlene Garcia

Thesis: "Flavorful Encounters: An Exploratory Study Unveiling the Experiences of Night Market Vendors in Los Angeles"

Karla Nahomy Hernandez

Thesis: "Los Verdes: A Gendered Analysis of the U.S. Border Patrol"

Gabriela Perez

Thesis: "Chicano Bishop: Reconstructing the Life Narrative of Patrick F. Flores, 1929-2017"

Sara G. Reyes Noriega

Thesis: "Guatemalan Food Memories: Understanding Guatemalan Identity, Belonging, and Migration Through Pláticas and Charlas in Los Angeles"

Patricia Adriana Salazar

Thesis: "Racial Formation in Temecula: A Local History, 1940-1960"

HONORS DISTINCTION

Students who graduate with **College Honors** receive one of the highest academic awards UCLA can bestow on an undergraduate. College Honors requires not only outstanding work in a major field and in general courses but also a special set of rigorous courses, and students have to maintain superlative grades.

Latin Honors are based solely on a student's overall University of California GPA at the graduation. (gold fourragère)

SUMMA CUM LAUDE	3.992 minimum overall GPA
MAGNA CUM LAUDE	3.969 minimum overall GPA
CUM LAUDE	3.927 minimum overall GPA

The **Chancellor's Service Award** is a selective award honoring graduating undergraduate students who have made significant contributions to UCLA and/or the surrounding Los Angeles community through a sustained record of outstanding leadership and service. (blue and gold fourragère)

MAJOR GRADUATES

Bachelor of Arts in Chicana/o Studies

Adriana Aguilar
Leslie Jasmin Aguilar-Ibarra
Omar Almaraz Villanueva
Natalia Arellanes
Natalia Arnold
Jacqueline Arroyo Palafox
Alondra Avelar
Christine Barnfield *
Angela Lizbeth Beltran
Mauricio Cardiel
Fernando Carrillo
Gabriela Coronado Aguilar
Erick Delgado
Eduardo Diaz
Stephaney Diazbarriga
Maria Yamileth Diaz-Lobato
Esmeralda Figueroa
Paul Fitzgerald II
Jocelynn Franco
Carolina Sarabia Garcia
Tonalli Garcia-Rodriguez **
Dory Garnica Gutierrez
Evelyn Giron
Juanita Gomez Coronado
John Gonzalez
Wendy Paola Gonzalez Chavez
Gabriela Guzman
Jocelyn Hernandez Pineda
Christopher Huerta

Marilyn Infante
Frida Islas
Steven Kochert-Springer
Alan Enrique Lara Martinez
Miguel Lezama Jr.
Conrad Lomeli *
Daisy Luna-Contreras
Gabriella Macias
Edin Madrid
Isai Marcial
Jacqueline Mariela Marin
Daniela Marquez
Penelope Martinez-Figueroa
Mariangelina M. Mateo
Kyanna Celeste Medina
Daisy Abigail Mejia
Helen Mendez
Mynor Mendez Aguilar
Carlos Moreno
Kayla Murillo
Heidi Andrea Nava
Alma Ortega
Isabel Ortega
Juan Perez
Ruth Perez
Maribel Pineda
Erick Portillo
Silvia Preciado
Ema Ramos

MAJOR GRADUATES

Bachelor of Arts in Chicana/o Studies

Karla Reyna
Jennifer Rivera
Abril Rodriguez
Javier Rodriguez-Rivera Jr. **C**
Jessie Romero
Yuricela Rosas
Laila Rose
Ixtzaly Salas
Myriam Salazar Gonzalez
Xitlali Salcedo
Anthony Sanchez
Melissa Sanchez
Yessenia Sanchez Cruz
Leslie Sanchez Ruvalcaba
Cindy Sandoval
Emmily Sifuentes
Andres Tapia
Jacqueline Torres
Yuliana Urrutia
Gissel Yasmin Vanegas
Julio Vargas
Leslie Vasquez
Alejandra Villegas
Ambar Zamuria

HONORS KEY

H	College Honors
*	Cum Laude
**	Magna Cum Laude
***	Summa Cum Laude
C	Chancellor's Service Award

MINOR GRADUATES

Minor in Central American Studies

Victoria Bella
Maria Yamileth Diaz-Lobato
Anthony Echeverria
Giselle Flores
Mia Flores
Rosa Flores
Evelyn Giron
Arianna Gomez
Perla Diana Gonzalez
Vielka Nereyda Guevara
Fybbby Gutierrez-Medina
Brandon Hernandez **
Jocelyn Hernandez Pineda
Andrew Jandres
Brooke Keys *
Leztly Mancilla
Daniela Johana Mazariegos-Quintana
Ingri Mendoza Matias
Idaly Montenegro Tahay
Kelly Morales Conrado
Ruth Perez
Yanci Rosales
Jaelyn Ulloa
Pamela Vega Rivas
Alejandra Villegas
Natalia Zeledon

HONORS KEY

H	College Honors
*	Cum Laude
**	Magna Cum Laude
***	Summa Cum Laude
C	Chancellor's Service Award

MINOR GRADUATES

Minor in Chicana/o Studies

Yaritsa Abarca
Elvira Aceves
Xelete Aguilar
Vanessa Alvarez
Laura Aquino
Evelyn Arambula
Justyne Arreola
Anabel Asencio
Graciela Ayala
Vanessa Barajas
Cassian Barraza
Julie Bonilla
Nahomy Lizeth Cabrera
Jasmine Cajero
Genesis Cano Alvarez
Iris Cantoran *
Viviana Carmona Perez
Julianna Rose Carranza
Gissele Carrillo-Rubio
Bianca Casillas
Roxana Casillas-Rios
Natalie Castro
Kelly Centes
Ruben Cerda-Vargas
Debanhy Chapa
Alyssa Chavez
Boris Osmir Chavez Pacheco
Irma Chuc
Ricardo Cisneros
Aracely Corona-Lopez
Isaias Cruz Ramirez
Giancarlo Cuevas
Arianna De Luna

Celeste Diaz ***
Anthony Echeverria
Naomi Escobar
Rosa Flores
Viviana Flores
Aidan James Gallarzo
Anthony Garcia
Joaquin Garcia Barajas
Aldo Gonzalez
Samantha Gonzalez
Ana Guevara Landaverde
Michelle Gutierrez
Abigail Guzman
Justin Hedvat
Andrea Hernandez
Citlaly Hernandez
Rowan James **
Sarahí Jasso
Alejandro Jimenez
Xochitl Juarez
Sofia Kleeman Mendoza
Natalie Leon
Dolores Loaeza Pech
Daniela Lopez
Luz María Lopez
Manuel Madrigal-Hernandez
Stephanie Marquez
Joselyn Martinez
Melanie Thayme Mejia
Laysha Melendez
Allyson Melgar *
Kiara Mendez-Recinos
Jessica Mendoza

MINOR GRADUATES

Minor in Chicana/o Studies

Samantha Mendoza
 Brendon Alexander Milan-Howells
 Dalia Molina
 Alondra Morales
 Linette Morales
 Yobana Mariah Morales Meléndrez
 Catherine Moreno
 Gerardo Munoz
 Marcos Murillo Torres
 Aurora Nieves
 Angelina Northcutt
 Aliza Novoa
 Jocelyn Ashley Nuno
 Milena Ocampo
 Patricia Olvera
 Jessica Ornelas
 Maria Padilla Gutierrez
 Alondra Padilla Mata
 Nicole Paredes
 Anahi Perez
 Emely Perez
 Geraldine Perez
 Isabella Perez
 John Pfau **
 Emely Pinto
 Vianka Ponce
 Giovanni Prudente
 Teresita Quezada
 Eduardo Ramos
 Beatriz Carmen Rivas Rodriguez H
 Rosa Rivera
 Alexandra Rosas
 Layla Ruiz

Karen Ruiz Diaz
 Lauren Saenz-Ibarra
 Gemma Salazar
 Sonia Samayoa
 Dagoberto Sanchez
 Diego Sanchez
 Leslie Sanchez
 Lizbeth Serrano
 Michelle Solis Sandoval
 Erick Stephens
 Carlos Torres ** C
 Perla Valencia
 Florencia Valenzuela
 Evan Vasquez-Gomez ***
 Lizbeth Vega
 Alexandria Nicole Velasco
 Viviana Velasco
 Carolina Ventura
 Nicolas Zarco Jr.
 Myra Zavala

HONORS KEY

H	College Honors
*	Cum Laude
**	Magna Cum Laude
***	Summa Cum Laude
C	Chancellor's Service Award

CORE FACULTY

Leisy Abrego, Professor

Karina Alma, Assistant Professor

Eric Avila, Professor

Matthew Barreto, Professor

Charlene Villaseñor Black, Professor and Chair of CCAS

Maylei Blackwell, Professor

Floridalma Boj Lopez, Assistant Professor

Héctor Calderón, Professor

Genevieve Carpio, Associate Professor

Laura Chávez-Moreno, Assistant Professor

Kency Cornejo, Associate Professor

Jason De León, Professor

Yessica Garcia Hernandez, Assistant Professor

Alicia Gaspar De Alba, Professor

Raúl Hinojosa-Ojeda, Professor

Gaye Theresa Johnson, Associate Professor

Robert Chao Romero, Associate Professor and Vice Chair of CCAS

Veronica Terriquez, Professor

Abel Valenzuela, Professor and Dean of Social Sciences

Chris Zepeda-Millán, Associate Professor

JOINT FACULTY

Laura E. Gómez, Law & Sociology
Gary Segura, Public Policy & Political Science

Daniel G. Solórzano, Jr., Education
Joshua Javier Guzmán, Gender Studies

AFFILIATED FACULTY

David Hayes-Bautista, Medicine
Marissa Lopez, English
Chon A. Noriega, Film and Television

Vilma Ortiz, Sociology
Rafael Pérez-Torres, English

LECTURERS

Richard Andalon
Helen Burgos-Ellis
Virginia Espino
Cristina Frias
Lauren Frances Guerra
Audrey Harris

Celia Lacayo
Alma López Gaspar De Alba
Celina Martinez
Octavio Pescador
Martha Ramírez-Oropeza
Mindy Steinberg

EMERITI FACULTY

Judith Baca
Susan Plann
María Cristina Pons

Reynaldo F. Macías
Otto Santa Ana

DEPARTMENT STAFF

Charlene Villaseñor Black, Department Chair

Robert Chao Romero, Vice Chair & Director of Graduate Studies

Alain De Vera, Department Manager

Sandy Garcia, Office Coordinator

Eleuteria (Ellie) Hernández, Department Scheduler

Valeria Moedano, Academic Personnel Coordinator

Carla Ramos, Undergraduate Student Advisor

Janeth Ruvalcaba, Graduate Student Advisor

Mario Alvarado Cifuentes, Graduate Student Worker

Monsserrat Guerra, Student Worker

Amanda Paz, Student Worker

Lluvia Rodriguez, Student Worker

Audrey Wimberly, Student Worker

Farewell & Gratitude

As we celebrate the Class of 2025, we also bid farewell to two cherished faculty members whose time with our department is coming to a close.

Professor Charlene Villaseñor Black



After years of outstanding service, Professor Charlene Villaseñor Black is retiring from UCLA. She will serve as Endowed Chair in Art of the Americas at the University of Oxford, Worcester College. Her scholarship in Latinx art, mentorship, and leadership have profoundly shaped our department and inspired generations of students.

We thank her for her lasting contributions and wish her joy and fulfillment in retirement.

Professor Gaye Theresa Johnson

Professor Gaye Theresa Johnson will be joining UC Santa Barbara as Director of the Blum Center on Poverty, Inequality, and Democracy. Her transformative work in Black and Chicanx studies and her deep commitment to students have left a lasting impact on our community.

We thank her for her vision, passion, and years of service, and wish her all the best in this next chapter.





*Congratulations,
Class of 2025!*

*¡Felicidades,
Clase de 2025!*

We celebrate your achievements, resilience, and the journey that brought you here. Thank you for the brilliance and heart you've shared with our community.

Celebramos sus logros, su resiliencia y el camino que los trajo hasta aquí. Gracias por compartir su luz y su compromiso con nuestra comunidad.

We are proud of you and excited for all that lies ahead. Estamos orgullosos de ustedes y emocionados por todo lo que viene.

