

Washington State University College of Education

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will defend the thesis on

Date: April 8, 2020

Time: Noon

Location: Pullman – Elson Floyd Cultural Center, Knowledge Room

Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend

NUESTRAS VOCES: DIGITAL TESTIMONIOS OF FIRST-GENERATION CHICANX WOMEN

Chair: Pamela Bettis

The experiences of first-generation Chicax women in predominantly white institutions of higher education are often forced under panethnic terms such as Hispanic and Latino/x. This in turn, erases their complex identities and makes the inaccurate assumption that all those forced under those panethnic terms share the same experiences. Their complex identities are silenced when they become the “subjects” of educational research inquiries under panethnic terms. This project centers first-generation Chicax women’s voices and experiences being in a predominantly white institution through the use of digital testimonios. A total of five first-generation Chicax women, both currently enrolled and already graduated from a predominantly white university in the Pacific North West participated in a two-and-a-half-day digital testimonios workshop. The testimoniadoras collectively learned how to create their digital testimonios using several digital devices and software with the guidance of the “facilitator” and “co-facilitator.” As a way to honor the narratives of the testimoniadoras, their narratives were not subject to research analysis. Instead, I, the “researcher” share my testimonio as a first-generation Chicax women “facilitating” this workshop using a combination of Anzaldúa’s (2012) borderlands framework and Indigenous epistemologies to guide me through this reflection process. My testimonio of my experience being the “facilitator” of this workshop speaks on the constant splitting of selves and the importance of centering relations in the journey of creating the digital and written testimonios. This work adds to the rejection of dominant research practices and speaks to the importance of centering relations when working with first-generation Chicax women. As well as the importance of not subjecting their stories/testimonios to the gaze of dominant Western research analysis. Moving forward, there is knowledge to learn from groups that have been forced into the margins if we allow ourselves as listeners to hear their narratives. We can choose to hear their stories to inform the much-needed changes in predominantly white institutions of education to move towards a more equitable education for all students.