GUIDEBOOK

OVERVIEW, INITIAL FINDINGS, &
IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK OF
THE LATINX ORAL HISTORY INITIATIVE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

PREPARED BY KAYLA DUNN

LATINX ORAL HISTORY INITIATIVE

Section I. Overview

Reflections: Oral Histories seeks to chronicle a more personal and inclusive history of the University of Virginia by collecting and sharing the stories of University students, staff, faculty, alumni, and Charlottesville community members who have contributed to its rich and complex institutional narrative. With the ongoing participation of members from across the University and Charlottesville communities, we hope to encourage an intergenerational transfer of knowledge and a more comprehensive, diversified collection of stories that enrich and carry our University's history forward.

The Latinx Oral History Initiative seeks to uphold this mission, as well as recontextualize the understanding of the Latinx identity by capturing the diverse stories of Latinx students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members. This Guidebook serves to detail the purpose of this initiative, methodologies, initial findings, and implications for future work.

Section II. Introduction

If you researched Latinx history at the University of Virginia just a few years ago, you would only find the story of Fernando Bolivar, nephew of prominent 17th-century Latin American leader, Simon Bolivar, who attended the University in 1827. He was the first Latinx student to attend the University according to historical interpretation and while he is the namesake of the Bolivar Network and La Casa Bolivar, it must not be omitted that Fernando fit the profile of who this university was built for: wealthy, white men. For centuries, Fernando Bolivar's story was the only known narrative of Latinx students at UVA, yet he attended the University only two years after it opened. Therefore, the question is: where are the 200 years worth of Latinx history at UVA?

The collection of Latinx history has likely occurred for years through story-telling and historical research by students; however, these entities have often been inaccessible, lost, or forgotten through time. Even if history is documented, the number of documents brought to the UVA's Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections archives is limited. For instance, in the initial online searches on Latinx history at UVA, I came across a Prezi presentation on UVA's Latinx history curated by "*Nuestra Historia: The Latino Community at UVa*" in 2014.[1] This demonstrates how projects such as these are both unknown and/or inaccessible to students, without persistent research. Latinx History of UVA, curated by Natalia Heguaburo (CLAS '19), was one of the first collected histories of Latinx-identifying and affiliated organizations that was housed on an online, accessible platform.[2] Since its creation, it has served as a resource for people to learn about student organizations, their origin stories, and in particular, learning about the incredible impact they have on the University and Charlottesville communities. Historical collection of Latinx organizations is impactful work, yet we must remember that there are a number of Latinx students who do not join Latinx student organizations, which have historically been predominantly composed of white Latinx students. This is why the Latinx Oral History Initiative aims to expand this research of organizations to include individual student experiences. The collection of history is generally confined to student leaders and organizations, but there is more to life at the University - stories that are equally impactful and powerful. That being said, how do we capture these stories and make them accessible for all? It was this question that inspired the creation of the Latinx Oral History Initiative.

The purpose of the Latinx Oral History Initiative is to further the historical and archival history of Latinx people at the University of Virginia, primarily focusing on the individual stories of alumni, faculty, staff, and students. The Latinx identity is not homogenous, nor a singular race, religion, or cultural background. It is an ethnicity that spans across all racial, religious, linguistic, and cultural identities - a term only bounded by geographic location. False notions of the Latinx identity occur both external and internal to members of the Latinx community, which drives pervasive anti-Blackness, anti-indigeneity, and heteronormativity that still persists in Latinx culture and society. And although this guidebook will often use the term "Latinx community," it is important to note how this phrase suggests that there is homogeneity in experience, background, and thought. All of these reasons prove

why it is important to document the individual stories - to demonstrate the diversity and heterogeneous experiences of Latinx-identifying people.

In the words of Maya Angelou, "If you don't know where you've come from, you don't know where you're going." Her words demonstrate the power of institutional memory, a term often used to describe the intergenerational transfer of knowledge as it applies to the college experience. As current Latinx students, institutional memory allows us to see the journey of other Latinx students before us, so we may learn from their contributions and for some, feel a sense of belonging. Their experiences become living evidence that we can make it through as well.

When considering the intended audience for this Initiative, it should be clearly noted that this work is not solely for Latinx people - the University of Virginia community and administration at large stands to gain so much from our history, to (un)learn their conceptions of what "Latinx" means, and question their actions towards inclusion and equity. A dedication to inclusion does not end with admitting and matriculating students from marginalized backgrounds, it includes creating an environment that fosters their success and belonging. UVA cannot be a great and good University until it moves past simply acknowledging history, and starts to reflect on, learn, and conceptualize it so that it can utilize it to provide a more equitable and accessible University for Latinx students.

My hope is that this Initiative will change your perspectives and help you view the University through a different lens, question preconceived notions, and challenge your understanding. Most importantly, may it offer empowerment to all who share and listen to these stories.

Section III: Methodology

The Latinx Oral History Initiative began with researching and reviewing previous collections of Latinx history, such as Latinx History at UVA by Natalia Heguaburo and her subsequent thesis, "*(In)visible Archives: The Significance of Hispanic and Latinx Students throughout the University of Virginia's History.*" After reviewing her work as well as reviewing the resources and interview strategies provided by *Reflections: Oral Histories*, a plan was developed for the Latinx Oral History Initiative. The subsequent timeline was as follows:

- **Fall 2019: Building Foundational Knowledge**
  - Overview of Existing Archival Research
    - This included the review of Natalia's thesis work, surveying documents in UVA's Special Collection, and identifying articles from the Cavalier Daily archives focused on Latinx student life.
  - Demographic Data Analysis from the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis
    - To establish a background by understanding enrollment and demographic trends of Latinx students, faculty, and staff.
  - Developing Oral History Skills and Protocol
    - To ensure an effective and interviewee-centered oral history process.
- **Spring 2020: Oral Histories Collection**
  - Garnering Interest for Interviews
    - The Initiative was promoted through social media, the Bolivar Network, direct emails, and mainly, by referral. Interview referrals from current students and alumni were the most effective way in which we collected our initial interviews.
  - Interview Collection
    - 12 interviews were collected in the Spring of 2020. The interviews were audio recorded and then transformed into stories for the Reflections: Oral Histories website. The written stories were completed by Logan Botts ('22), Marisa Dinko ('21), Julia Rupp ('20), and Kayla Dunn ('20).

- ○ Overview of Findings through our Virtual Presentation on May 20, 2020
  - • The presentation gave a brief overview of the Initiative and allowed participants to discuss the importance of historical collection of marginalized voices at UVA.
- **Summer 2020 - Onward: Continued Historical Collection**

In the next portion of this Guidebook, the initial findings from the demographic data and interviews will be presented, along with the implications of this work on the University.

Section IV: Initial Findings

In the Fall 2019, I began building my knowledge base of Latinx history by surveying the collected archival history on the Latinx History at UVA website and through personal visits to UVA's Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections archives. The main focus on the Latinx Oral History Initiative was not archival research; however, it was important to develop a preliminary understanding of not only the available history, but the amount of information and its accessibility. In Natalia's thesis, she begins her introduction detailing how despite the over 16 million artifacts residing in Special Collections, there is very little documentation of Hispanic/Latinx people at the University. Unsurprisingly, research in Special Collections revealed very little detail and specific documentation retelling the experiences of Latinx students.

In her work, Natalia also notes how census collection that included the category "Hispanic" was not implemented until the 1970s at the University, meaning that the only way to identify Latinx students who attended prior to 1970 would be through manual search through student directories. This is an inherently flawed system, given that looking at someone's name and hometown is not effective or accurate in determining who may identify as "Latinx" or any racial/ethnic category. This makes uncovering Latinx history prior to 1970 much more difficult. After a few visits to Special Collections, my mind could only think about the many Latinx students and faculty who had attended the University of Virginia, whose stories have likely been lost through time.

Although I wanted to know more about the early history of Latinx students and faculty at the University, I decided to investigate documented census data (post-1970s) to better understand demographic composition and trends in Latinx student admittance and matriculation into the present. Also given that most interviewees would likely have attended in the past few decades, it also provided foundational context before interview collection. This began the quantitative analysis of the experiences of Latinx students through demographic data, provided by the Office of Institutional Analytics and Research.[3]

Demographic Data
Undergraduate Students

Quantitative analysis of demographic data for marginalized communities is challenging, given the insufficient and inaccurate categorizations of race and ethnicity. In the University of Virginia census data, "Hispanic" is included as a demographic group distinct from other racial categories listed. This reinforces the false notion that Latinx is a racial category, when it is a ethnicity representative of all races. Therefore, as you read through the data below, keep in mind the implications of the Hispanic/Latinx categorization and how data collection across all Universities and our nation can be subsequently flawed.
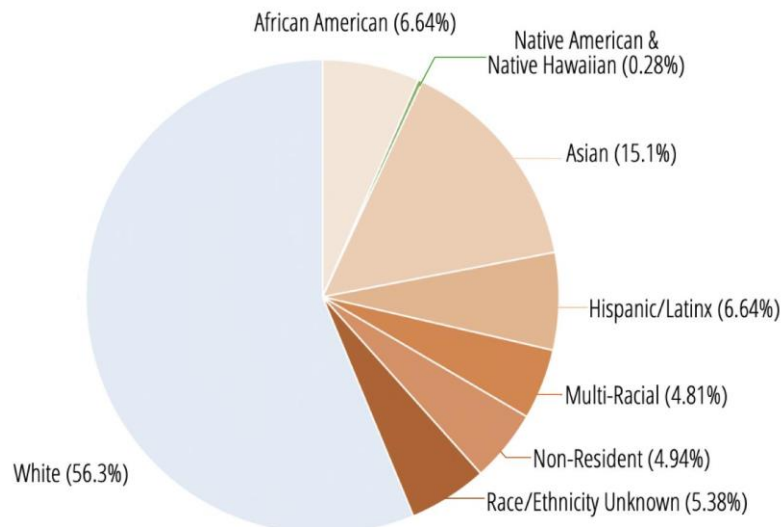
Figure 1. Representation of racial and ethnic diversity of faculty members across all schools at the University of Virginia in 2019. Non-Resident, as known as International Students, is listed as a demographic category, meaning the racial and ethnic composition of that category is unknown in this data.
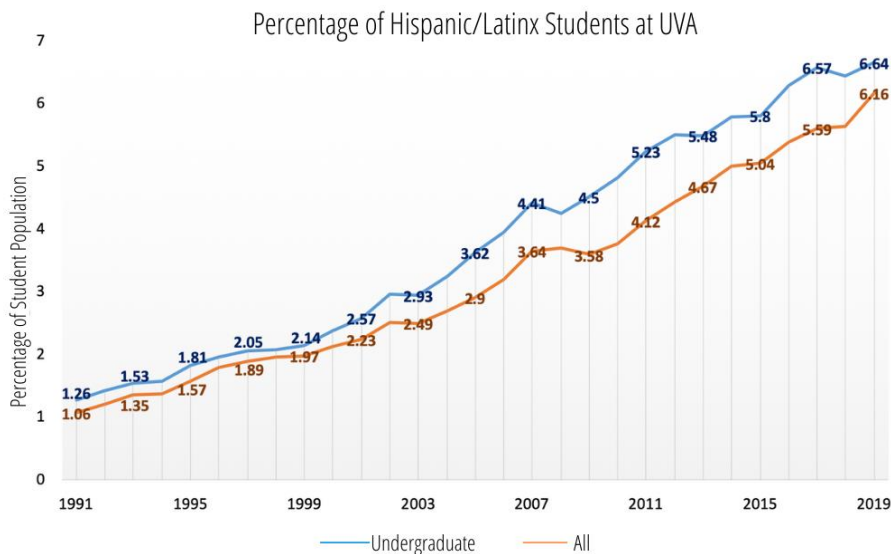

Figure 2. Percentage of the student population, both undergraduate and overall (which includes graduate and first-professional students), who self-identify as Hispanic/Latinx students at the University of Virginia from 1991 to 2019, provided by the Office of Institutional Analytics and Research.

The figure above demonstrates the proportion of Latinx students of the UVA student body across all schools from 1991 to 2019. It's important to note two issues: first, the percentage above does not include "non-US residents" which are international students, meaning that there may be Latinx students who are not accounted for in this statistic. Second, that the number of Latinx students is for the overall student body, meaning demographics likely vary between schools. Although this data was not given in the original data set, representation of marginalized populations is generally lower in specialized schools, such as the School of Architecture, McIntire School of Commerce, Batten School of Public Policy, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, School of

Nursing, and others. Although this research does not have this data to present, this deduction is based on interviews and conversations with both current students and alumni who have experienced the lack of diversity and resources of marginalized students first-hand.

In the Fall of 2018, the Cavalier Daily published a series of articles named "Voices of the 6%", following a campaign to raise awareness about the challenges facing Latinx students at the University.[4] The activism of Latinx students detailed in these articles, in addition to the creation of new student organizations in recent years such as the Latinx Leadership Institute (LLI), Political Latinxs United for Movement and Action in Society (PLUMAS), Central Americans for Empowerment (CAFE), Afro-Latinx Student Organization (ALSO), and others demonstrate that the growing needs of the Latinx community and the ways in which students created spaces for students of color amongst predominantly white organizations, both internal and external to the Latinx community.
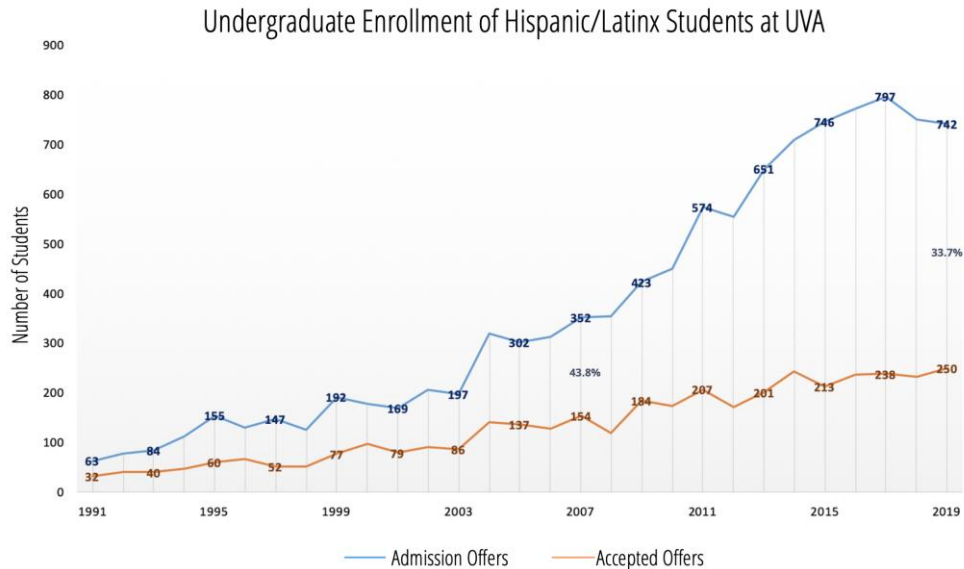

Figure 3. Number of undergraduate students who self-identify as Hispanic/Latinx that received offers of admission and accepted admission offers at the University of Virginia from 1991 to 2019, provided by the Office of Institutional Analytics and Research.

An important takeaway from Figure 3 is the visual representation of the yield rate or matriculation rate. Yield rate is the number of accepted admission offers divided by the number of admission offers. In 2007, the yield rate of Latinx students was 43.8% (meaning 43.8% of students who received admission offers enrolled in the University). In 2019, the yield rate of Latinx students was 33.7%. This suggests a gradually widening gap, between those who matriculate into the University. These trends prompt an important question: what is causing decreasing yield rates?

Yield rates have been a long-standing topic of conversation between the UVA Office of Admission and Latinx student organizations, who have been working to identify the cause and craft solutions to increase matriculation. The demographic data and interviews indicate some potential contributing factors, including lack of financial aid, sufficient admission staff, sense of inclusion, and many others. Additionally, decreasing matriculation rates may also be contributed to UVA's former policy barring undocumented students from enrolling, despite admission. DACAmented students and international students are also ineligible for financial aid. The cause of decreased matriculation is an important problem to be addressed, especially given the University's dedication towards diversity, equity, and inclusion detailed in their 2030 Plan. With the University's new policy allowing undocu+ students to matriculate and enroll - a change made in response to the activism of undocUVA - they must also offer financial aid and specific resources to encourage matriculation and foster a supportive environment.

Graduate Students

Analysis of graduate and professional students is essential to analyzing trends and understanding their experiences within the context of both the University and the Latinx community. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students have familiarity with college life and subsequently, its social, emotional, and academic demands. This does not mean that being a graduate student does not come with its own challenges, but that these students typically have familiarity with higher education to varying degrees. The graduate student experience, especially of marginalized students, can be particularly isolating at the University, given that the physical distance from Central Grounds and disconnect between both the campus life and the resources that are more readily accessible for undergraduate students. In terms of student make-up, 5.14% (412) of graduate students identify as Hispanic/Latinx in 2018; although this may be comparable to the 6% makeup of Hispanic/Latinx undergraduate students, this population is spread across all graduate schools and departments, which can often be decentralized and disjointed.

In responses to these challenges, student organizations, like the Latinx Graduate Student Alliance, work to further connect Latinx students from across graduate schools in an effort to build community and coalition. There are also Latinx student organizations at specific University schools, such as Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), Latin American Law Organization (LALO), Hispanic American Network at Darden (HAND), and others.
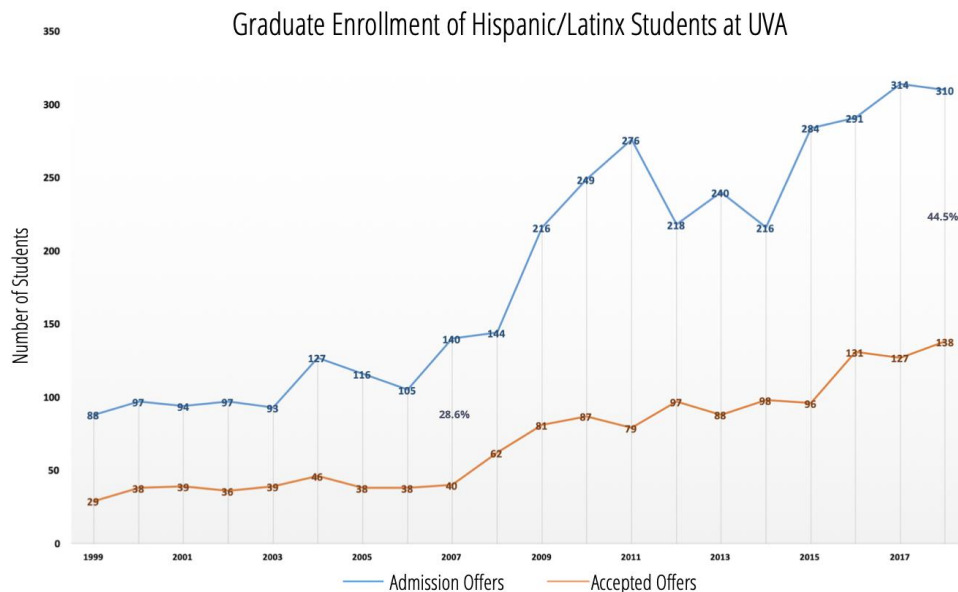

Figure 4. Number of graduate students who self-identify as Hispanic/Latinx that received offers of admission and accepted admission offers at the University of Virginia from 1991 to 2018, provided by the Office of Institutional Analytics and Research.

This figure also depicts the yield rates of Latinx graduate students from 1991 to 2018. The yield rate for graduate students was 28.6% in 2007 and increased to 44.5% by 2018. This increase may be due to the creation of new graduate programs, including the founding of the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy in 2007.

Faculty

Latinx history is not solely a student-derived narrative, as it should also encapsulate the experiences of faculty and others connected to the University in myriad ways. Just as students from marginalized backgrounds traverse both the opportunities and challenges at the University life, faculty may do so as well within academia. The chart below displays the racial and ethnic diversity of faculty from across all seven schools of the University:
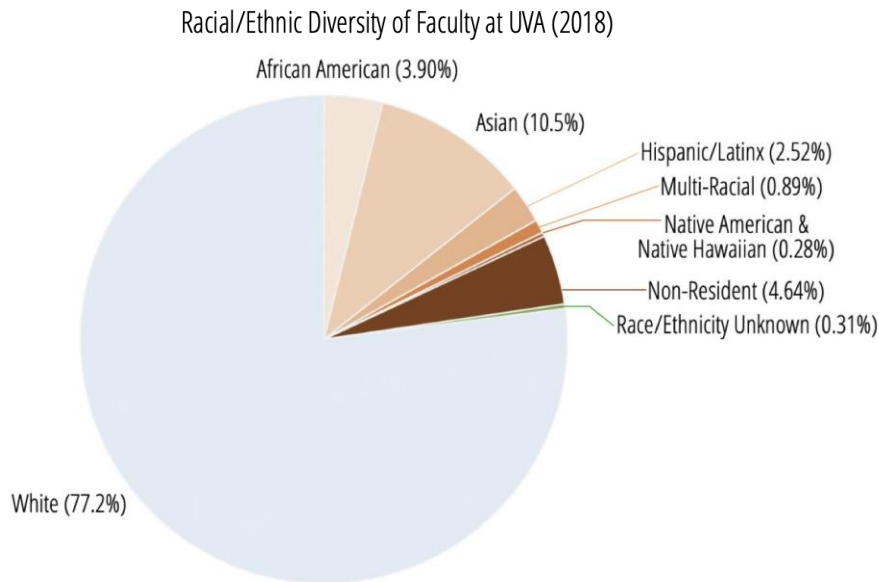
Figure 5. Representation of racial and ethnic diversity of faculty members across all schools at the University of Virginia in 2019. Non-Resident is listed as a demographic category, meaning the racial and ethnic composition of that category is unknown.

At the University of Virginia in 2019, Hispanic/Latinx faculty represented 2.52% of the University faculty based on data from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. In their delineations, we again see the issue that international faculty are not differentiated based on race/ethnicity, but rather lumped into one category. There was also a percentage of the population who did not specify any racial or ethnic category. The common practice of incorporating non-racial categories amongst racial demographic data often makes data interpretation inaccurate; therefore, we can only approximate the number of Latinx faculty.

Regardless of whether the proportion is slightly skewed due to data collection, Latinx faculty are still disproportionately underrepresented within the larger University community. In this context, the issue of tokenization occurs when the identities of folx from marginalized groups are utilized only to prevent criticism from outside groups or as a symbolic effort; this also often forces individuals to feel as if they are the sole representatives of their communities in a space of predominantly non-marginalized people. Tokenism becomes dangerous because it allows for institutions to avoid addressing structural issues under the guise of diversity. This can occur with faculty representation, especially if there are few numbers of faculty from marginalized communities at an institution. Though this situation may be nuanced, it may create undue emotional and social pressure for faculty to advocate for their communities, especially within an institution that may already feel unfamiliar or unwelcoming.

	1984	2012	2019
Total Faculty	2075 (100%)	2991 (100%)	3265 (100%)
Hispanic/Latinx faculty	15 (0.72%)	56 (1.87%)	81 (2.23%)
Hispanic/Latinx faculty who are Tenured/Tenure-Track	***	31 (1.04%*; 2.05%**)	44 (1.35%*; 2.62%**)

Table 1. Depicts the number and percentages of total faculty, the number of total Hispanic/Latinx faculty, and tenure/ and tenure-track faculty in 1984, 2012, and 2019 at UVA. ***Data not available.
*Percentage represents the number of faculty divided by the total number of faculty.
**Percentage represents the number of Hispanic/Latinx faculty who are Tenured/Tenure-Track out of all Tenured/Tenure-Track faculty

In the process of reviewing faculty trends of tenure and tenure-track faculty, we compared UVA's trends to other public universities that are similar in rank, size, academic rigor, and values. At the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, University of California - Los Angeles, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have reported approximately 4.9%, 6.0%, 3.7% of tenured faculty identified as Hispanic/Latinx in 2018, respectively.[5,6,7]

These comparisons don't indicate sufficient faculty representation at these other institutions, but instead demonstrate how the University of Virginia is falling behind as a flagship public institution, especially in relation when compared to comparable universities. For example, UNC at Chapel Hill and UVA are comparable in many ways: in institution size, region, and state demographic composition, with a Hispanic/Latinx population of ~9%. However, in 2018, there were 45 tenure or tenure-track Latinx faculty at UVA, whereas UNC Chapel Hill had 53 tenured and 28 tenure-track Latinx faculty; thus, UNC had more tenure-track faculty alone than we had tenure and tenure-track combined.

From 1984 to 2019,
representation of Hispanic/Latinx faculty began in:

College of Arts & Sciences (9)
Ridley School of Education (1)
School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (1)
School of Medicine (2)

School of Architecture
Darden School of Business

School of Professional
and Continuing Studies

1984   **1999**   **2008**   **2019**

1994   **2007**   **2016**

McIntire School of Commerce   School of Law   Batten School of
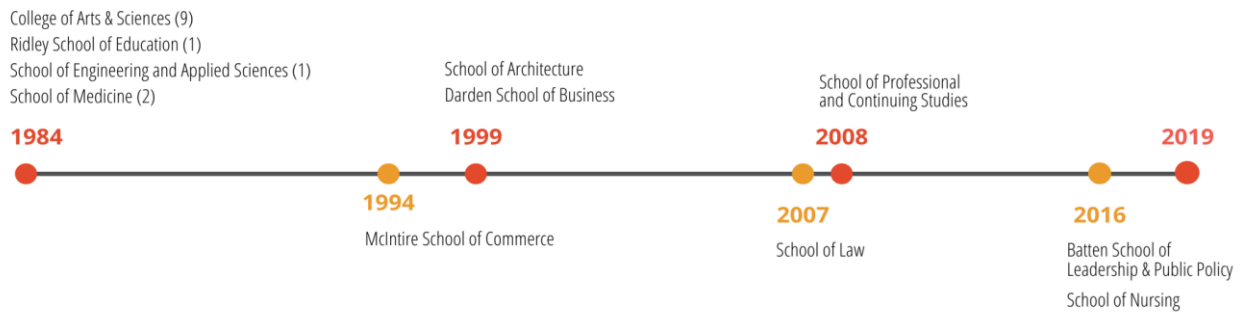Leadership & Public Policy
School of Nursing

Figure 6. Timeline of Hispanic/Latinx faculty representation by school between the years 1984 and 2019.

UVA's data also specified the racial and ethnic demographics of faculty members by school. The collection of this data began in 1984. There may have been Hispanic/Latinx faculty at these schools prior to 1984 though no formal record exists. In 1984, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Curry School of Education, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and the School of Medicine all had faculty member(s) who identified as Hispanic/Latinx. Representation of Hispanic/Latinx faculty began in the McIntire School of Commerce in 1994, 1999 for the School of Architecture and Darden School of Business, 2007 for the School of Law, and in 2008 at the Professional and Continuing Studies. The last schools to include Latinx faculty are Batten School of Leadership & Public Policy and the School of Nursing in 2016, only four years prior to the publication of this guidebook in 2020, and 200 years after the opening of the University; indicative of the slow growth in faculty representation.

The lack of diverse representation in faculty is not isolated to UVA but rather is a national issue. According to the Pew Research Center, there is far worse diversity across faculty than student populations. Nationwide, an estimated 20% of undergraduates identify as Latinx, whereas only 5% of faculty in higher education identify as Latinx - this trend is sustained across other races and ethnicities.[8]

Faculty diversity is important to higher education for a number of reasons. In terms of the impact on students, students from marginalized backgrounds can view faculty from shared backgrounds as mentors. Research has shown that increased representation in faculty can close performance gaps of marginalized students by 20 - 50% in community colleges, as students typically report increased efforts in school and increased goal-setting.[9] Even throughout our initial interviews and conversations with students and alumni, many have shared stories on

the impact that faculty members from a shared identity can have in career formation, and feelings of belonging at an institution. Additionally, diversity in faculty is a net benefit to the University community at large. Though the burden of educating white peers and colleagues should not be placed entirely on members from marginalized communities, diversity across racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds will inherently expose students to varying ideas, perspectives, and narratives, which will only enhance and deepen students' education. Overall, diverse representation in faculty is critical, and capturing the stories of these faculty is important for understanding the full scope of our history.

University Staff

	2012	2019
Number of Total Staff*	5516	6652
Number of Hispanic/Latinx Staff	67 (1.21%)	241 (3.62%)

*Total staff includes University staff; Classified Staff; and Professional Research Staff
**Percentage represents the number of faculty divided by the total number of faculty.

In the table above, the percentage of staff who identify as Latinx are compared from 2012 to 2018. Total staff includes University staff, Classified staff, and Professional Research staff. University staff is a large category of employees, composed of operation staff such as employees performing office, laboratory, student, and library support; building construction and maintenance; equipment services; public safety; professional staff such as coaches and assistant coaches; and executive and senior administrators. Classified staff are salaried, non-faculty employees who cannot participate in UVA's HR Plan. Professional research staff are employees who are principally engaged in research and have limited-term appointments.[10]

The function of staff, from operational to administrative, is critical to the functioning of University, and institutional decision making that affects policy and practice. As evident from these small proportions, there are disproportionately less Latinx staff members who can be a part of these processes, especially in senior leadership positions.

Interview Collection

After building a knowledge base for existing Latinx history and demographic trends, interview collection began in the Spring of 2020. The goal of the interview was to give interviewees the chance to reflect on their time at the University, from the application process to graduation, and to share their experiences and perspectives. Although there were set questions for each interview, it was crucial that the conversation would be guided by the interviewee so they could share what they felt was most important to them. Offering their reflections, filled with both positive and negative memories, the interviewees displayed admirable vulnerability. Because everyone had a different relationship with the University, it was important that the interviewees left the interviews feeling comfortable and empowered about sharing their stories. Thus, if the interviewee wanted certain information or stories redacted or removed, it was our duty to uphold those wishes and present a story that was truthful and authentic.

The process of reading and listening to the interviews also had great impacts on the audience. Across the diversity of experiences contained within the collection, many have found stories that resonate with them. These shared experiences create a platform that can unite strangers, fostering comradery, connections, and the exchange of meaningful narratives. By facilitating a process that re-engaged alumni with the UVA community, and connected current community members to alumni, the interview process creates a mutual sense of validation. Sharing stories

empowers not only the storyteller but the listener as well. Preserving that exchange on an accessible platform is an intentional part of the project to ensure that the process of collecting interviews can have as broad a reach as possible.

The initial population of interviewees were alumni; however, from this point onward, the Initiative will be accepting interviews from current students, faculty, staff, and community members who wish to share their stories about their time at the University and within the greater community. The University community and greater Charlottesville community are intertwined and they are impacted by one another for better or worse. Their stories are equally important when depicting the history and effects of UVA.

Section V: Implications for Change

Though the intended purpose of this Initiative was to collect stories, the process revealed institutional gaps and issues that must be addressed.

1. **The University of Virginia must hire a University Historian**

Institutional memory is critical for effective and efficient progress. It allows students and administrators alike to make informed decisions in order to enact meaningful and positive change. The collection and preservation of history at the University of Virginia have long been tasks that fall on the shoulders of students and student organizations who would benefit greatly from a central entity devoted to the preservation of institutional memory. Student organizations experience rapid leadership turnover, making the continuation of work, connections with administrators, and internal record collection difficult to manage. When institutional memory is not accessible, it can stunt growth and thwart change. For instance, *Our University to Shape*, a proposal collaborated and written by Latinx students at UVA in the Fall of 2018, addressed numerous ways that the University could improve and develop resources for Latinx students.[11] The students who contributed towards the proposal knew they were not the first students to advocate for these concerns, but there was no easily accessible document where they could see this history of Latinx student activism. During the first interviews for the Latinx Oral History Initiative, alumni spoke about advocating for issues that mirrored those addressed in the *Our University to Shape* proposal. The sharing of their experiences allowed for the contextualization of Latinx student activism for at least the last 20 years, most of which had been entirely undocumented or lost within University records. If students had the connections and information that are now being uncovered, the *Our University to Shape* proposal, and other initiatives, could have been fortified with the additional resources and knowledge that had already been collected.

The concerns addressed in *Our University to Shape* mirror concerns students have been expressing for over two decades. The cyclical nature of student demands and slow pace of progress shows how these issues have been overlooked and neglected throughout the years, leaving generations of students with unanswered questions and unfulfilled needs. Some of the University's greatest issues can be addressed through listening to members of the University community and considering practical implementation of their ideas. As noted in an article by Michele Christian, professor and oral historian at Iowa State University, "active documentation in a university and college setting is essential to ensure that we record what it means to be a student, otherwise, the history of the university will remain the story of the administration without regard to the student population the university created to serve."[12] The University of Virginia has a duty to not simply record and listen to the stories and experiences of marginalized students, but to actively work to create an equitable institution. Without the presence of these students, there would be no institution.

Much of the historical research and activism that occurs at the University is the product of student labor. This work produced by students is novel, powerful, and contributes greatly to the institution in many ways. If the University truly hopes to benefit from students' historical research, then it is the University's responsibility to provide a platform and resources so their findings are accessible to the greater community. Moreover, with the

impact of the work as significant as it has been, students should be compensated for their time and contributions. Expecting gratis contributions that enrich the University's narrative in the name of student self-governance only perpetuates the disproportionate burden placed on marginalized students to advocate and sacrifice for their communities while administration often takes credit for their work. This is why the creation of an Office of the University Historian is needed.

In a proposal spearheaded by Logan Botts ('22) and other members of the Reflections: Oral Histories team submitted to the UVA Racial Equity Task Force, we advocate for the creation of such an office and position to provide infrastructure to students, faculty, and staff who collect and curate historical information.[13] This infrastructure would make this history, in particular institutional memory, accessible for all who seek it out.

2. Increase representation of diverse faculty and staff, in particular on tenure-track.

In addition to hiring a University Historian and creating this office, the University must make a commitment to hiring more faculty from marginalized communities, especially faculty of color. In a recent Cavalier Daily article from January 2020, University data from 2019 has shown an increase in diverse faculty representation by 7% since 2015.[14] Despite this increase, there is still a long way to go to fully ameliorate the under-representation of faculty of color at the University. As deputy University spokesperson Wes Hester said in this interview with the Cavalier Daily, "Increasing the diversity of our faculty is an important priority for the University and one that is essential to achieve our aspiration to be both great and good. And while significant progress is already being made, there is more work ahead." His point remains salient and increasingly important due to the new financial implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The University has also been under recent scrutiny for its tenure process and procedures for professors from marginalized communities. Two Black faculty members, Paul Harris and Tolu Odumosu, both appealed their negative tenure decision due to flawed processes and criteria.[15] In the accounts, they described how tenure review committees have often consisted of all white colleagues, which raises questions about potential racial and ethnic bias. Although UVA denied that any bias took place, the institution was unwilling to share their specific tenure rates for Black professors.

Increased diverse faculty representation, in particular on tenure/tenure-track, has been advocated for by student organizations for decades. The Black Student Alliance has released a series of demands and proposals which have called for a change in faculty representation. In their Reiteration of Historic, Yet Unmet, Demands, released on June 1, 2020, they emphasized their previous demands to increase Black faculty as mentioned in the "March to Reclaim Our Grounds" demand in 2017.[16] The need for increased faculty representation and recruitment efforts for faculty from marginalized backgrounds has also been discussed in *Our University to Shape* and *We Are Not Invisible: A Report on Academic Reform* released by the Asian Leaders Council in 2018.[17]

It is also pertinent to note that there is a national trend of underrepresentation of women and people of color in tenure and tenure-track positions - a trend that UVA participates in. Although this is a national phenomenon, when UVA is viewed comparatively with other institutions, we are lagging on this front. Given the University's commitment to Inclusive Excellence, this is an important step towards achieving these goals.

Furthermore, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have forced the University to reevaluate its budget to make up for lost revenue. These budget cuts have not only affected salaries, but have also affected departmental and office budgets, such as funding for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Thus, though there are significant challenges ahead for the University to maintain its commits towards equity detailed in the 2030 Plan, it is imperative that it maintains this commitment and continues to increase representation.[18]

3. Provide increased financial and infrastructural support to multicultural alumni networks.

Alumni networks are positive entities that both benefit students and alumni. They allow alumni to network, both personally and professionally, with current students and other alumni, sharing advice, resources, and stories.

This has a direct correlation to professional achievement and a positive career trajectory, as well as promoting sustained relationships. It also helps them feel more connected to the University, given that the University at large may not have always provided a welcoming and inclusive environment during their time on Grounds. Given the benefits, adequate resources should be provided to alumni networks for marginalized communities so they can have the resources to provide frequent events, including alumni weekends.

In addition to alumni networks, increased financial support should be allocated towards Multicultural Student Services, the Office of African-American Affairs, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and other UVA entities that support students from marginalized backgrounds, which represent approximately 40% of the student body. Given the essential functioning of these offices, continued support must be prioritized as they are instrumental in the success of marginalized students.

Section VI: Future Work

The Latinx Oral History Initiative will continue to collect interviews and conduct smaller research projects aimed towards capturing the full breadth of Latinx history at the University of Virginia. Research projects within the initiative may include continued historical collection of Latinx student organizations, community collectives, and Charlottesville's Latinx history. There are stories, both historical and in the making, that must be shared and documented. We hope to elevate these stories and initiatives so others may connect with them and support their efforts.

We are also beginning to collect interviews from Latinx members across the University and Charlottesville areas, which includes current students, faculty, staff, alumni, and local residents. It is important to capture memories and experiences as early as possible to prevent difficulty with memory recall. Interviewing current students is a great resource to learn more about the reactions and sentiments towards the present moment at an institution - more than what most documents can provide.

As curators and consumers of these stories, it is our responsibility to actively listen to and (un)learn our understanding of identity. In an article by Alan Pelaez Lopez entitled "The X in Latinx is a Wound, Not a Trend," "Latinx," although used as a gender-neutral term, speaks towards how Latinidad as a construct has played a role in the oppression of Black, Indigenous, and queer bodies.[19] Thus, if we are to be named the *Latinx* Oral History Initiative and if we all continue to use the term in our vernacular, we must understand the trauma caused by white Latinidad and actively show up, every day, for people whose narratives are systematically silenced in the Latin American diaspora. One way of doing this is by documenting and centering the stories of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Latinxs.

Operationally, we are currently seeking funding opportunities to hire students to conduct interviews, research historical interests of their choice, and generally further the mission of this Initiative. Due to budget cuts across the University caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are continuing to look for ways to support our current student work and retain our website as well as create new research positions that are compensated.

We hope that this Guidebook assists other students who wish to complete historical research. Our method is constantly evolving; thus, we hope to improve our previous efforts and showcases stories that demonstrate the variability in life at UVA. This Initiative is not possible with you. If you are interested in sharing your story, please contact us at reflectionsuva@gmail.com. We are also on social media, so stay connected to hear more about our interviewees and future projects.

Section VII. Conclusion

"The history of any institution of higher education is incomplete without the history of the student body."
Michele Christian, Professor at Iowa State University

The University of Virginia's history is not complete without the stories and histories of underrepresented groups at the University. Entering our Bicentennial, the institution must understand that the history they celebrate is one in which the voices of marginalized people are often silenced. Given that these experiences were historically under-recorded, it is the duty of Reflections: Oral Histories and the Latinx Oral History Initiative to uncover these stories and work to reclaim this history. In a University that can be historically difficult to navigate as a minority student, it is imperative that we offer these stories as a reminder of where we've been, how we've grown, and what we should aspire to be in the future. Ultimately, it is the duty of the University to go further than acknowledging this history, but to contextualize it through actions towards a more equitable institution.

References

1. https://prezi.com/wsw_vcsoppes/nuesta-historia-the-latino-community-at-uva/
2. https://latinxhistoryatuva.org
3. https://ira.virginia.edu
4. https://www.cavalierdaily.com/article/2018/10/necesitamos-maestros-latinx-students-seek-representative-faculty-members
5. https://diversity.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/DEI-FACULTY-REPORT-FINAL.pdf
6. https://equity.ucla.edu/data-hub/bruinx-dashboards/faculty-diversity/
7. https://oira.unc.edu/reports/
8. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/31/us-college-faculty-student-diversity/
9. https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/42920900.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A8a9fc19c71204df6749506519f8cca1e&seq=1
10. https://hr.virginia.edu/uva-employee-category
11. https://lsaatuva.weebly.com/our-university-to-shape.html?fbclid=IwAR11Krbqu4kHusILB5UmFY6HRgiFQnxUIJkPDQk4CCzGi5NC1pwJbaiSkHo
12. https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=speccoll_pubs
13. https://www.reflectionsoralhistory.com
14. https://www.cavalierdaily.com/article/2020/01/tenure-demographics-reflect-slight-increase-for-faculty-diversity-at-u-va
15. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/06/22/two-black-scholars-say-uva-denied-them-tenure-after-belittling-their-work
16. https://www.cavalierdaily.com/article/2020/07/facing-history-head-on-black-student-activists-submit-demands-to-president-ryans-racial-equity-task-force
17. https://docs.google.com/document/d/19GVS212B1wv59cLgFrbVt3-GNoKzIgvvsx9a_F3YuUk/edit?fbclid=IwAR0CXh7UEhj1W2eOvuKKna_j_3P_FCxZg1JTz0-mhprgTRLNzGS14ciPa8Q#heading=h.jcof464g0u5k
18. https://strategicplan.virginia.edu
19. https://www.colorbloq.org/the-x-in-latinx-is-a-wound-not-a-trend