

UC SANTA BARBARA

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[Andrea Estrada](#)

New Chair Appointed to UCSB Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies

Aida Hurtado has joined the faculty at UC Santa Barbara as the new chair of the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies. A social psychologist whose research focuses on race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender, she came to UCSB from UC Santa Cruz, where she spent more than 20 years as a scholar in the psychology department.

"The bulk of my work is on feminist theory, women's issues, and Latino educational achievement," said Hurtado, who earned her master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is the author of several books, including "Voicing Chicana Feminisms: Young Women Speak Out on Sexuality and Identity;" "The Color of Privilege: Three Blasphemies on Race and Feminism;" and "Chicana/o Identity in a Changing U.S. Society: ¿Quién Soy? ¿Quiénes Somos?" which she wrote with Patricia Gurin of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Hurtado has received numerous awards and honors, including this year's Women of Color Psychologies Award from the Association of Women in Psychology. The award recognizes her paper, "A View From Within and From Without: The Development of Latina Feminist Psychology," which she co-authored with graduate student Karina Cervantes. The paper appears in "The Handbook of U.S. Latino Psychology." The award will be presented at the organization's annual conference in Portland, Ore.,

later this month, where Hurtado will be a speaker.

In addition, in 2007, Hurtado was a recipient of the American Educational Research Association's SAGE Award for distinguished contributions to gender equity in education research.

"I am very happy to be here at UCSB," said Hurtado, who also holds the Luis Leal Endowed Chair. She succeeds María Herrera-Sobek, who held the chair from 1997 through 2009 and remains a faculty member in the Chicana and Chicano studies department, in addition to serving as associate vice chancellor for diversity, equity, and academic policy.

"The department is really incredible," Hurtado continued. "We have an amazing curriculum, a tremendous group of both young and established scholars, and a really great graduate program." Her challenges, she said, are to continue to bring national and international attention to the department and to make people aware of its strengths.

One of those, she noted, is the breadth and scope of the scholarship conducted in the department. "Ours is one of a few Chicano studies programs that stress cutting edge issues, such as those related to race, class, gender, sexuality, and immigration," she said. "We also value and emphasize cultural studies.

"We're not just the 10 faculty members in the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies," she continued. "We have affiliated faculty in several other departments, including history, feminist studies, literature, sociology, and anthropology. We are truly interdisciplinary in nature."

Said Melvin Oliver, the SAGE Sara Miller McCune Dean of Social Sciences: "Professor Hurtado is a profoundly interdisciplinary scholar whose merging of social psychology, Chicano studies, and feminist studies has led to pioneering research on social identity, intersectionality, and educational access. The application of her research to critical public policy issues encompasses the spirit of the Luis Leal Endowed Chair. I welcome her impressive abilities as a teacher, talent as a scholar, and ability to bring fresh ideas to the department as chair.

"I would also like to thank Juan-Vicente Palerm for his astute guidance and boundless dedication as acting chair during the search for a new chair."

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.