

Introducing Latine Studies

PD Fall 2024

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Presentation Outline

- Background & Context
- Our “Why”
- Radical Empathy
- Family First, and Extended Family
- Student Examples
- Takeaways
- Q & A



The Latine Studies Area

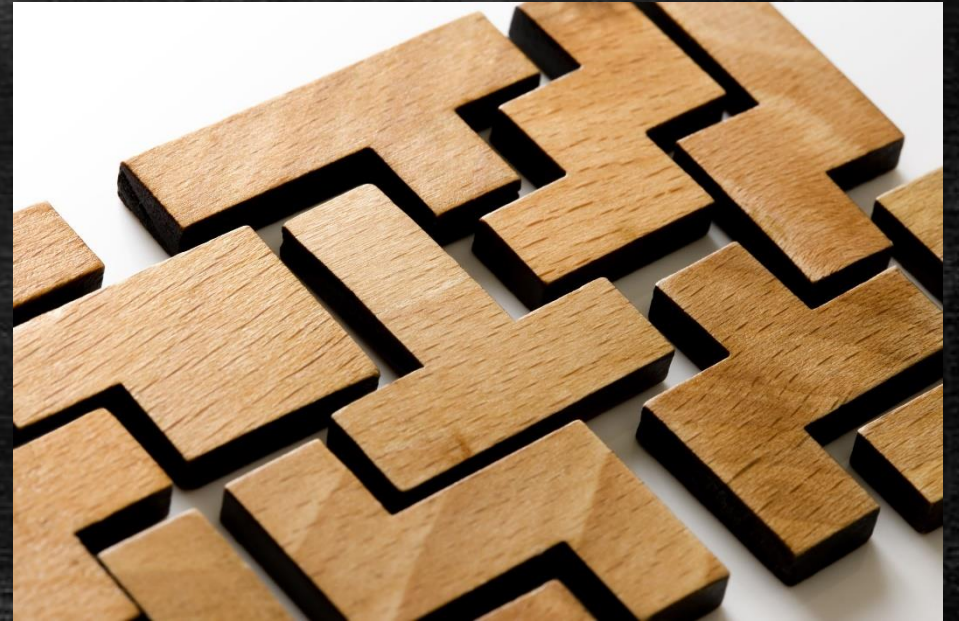
The Latine Studies Areas is supported by a three-year College Spark grant starting Fall 2024 to create the first Latine Studies Area at a Washington state two-year college.

Areas of emphasis:

- Student engagement through student-led activities, such as sponsoring student presenters at TYCA-PNW conference, and sponsoring innovative speakers such as Felicia Rose Chavez.
- Curriculum innovation to create cross-discipline Latine Studies Area designated courses that bridge lived experiences/suffering to curriculum.
- Raising awareness and respect of the cultural values of Latine students.
- Promoting progressive uses of language as a community-building tool that enhances belonging among Latine students and others.

Why the Latine Studies Area

Latine students are the largest "systematically non-dominant" (Jenkins 2021) student group at Whatcom. Latine students face academic isolation, experiencing conflicts between family life and academia and challenges to belonging and engagement which inadvertently impact college success and completion. "Latine students may feel isolated in the college classroom when their rhetorics do not align with the hegemonic rhetoric of academia" (Romero 2024).



The Latine Studies Area and WCC's Strategic Plan

Strategic goals supported:

Goal 1- Renew and expand impactful community connections within and beyond the college

Goal 2- Encourage innovation focused on delivering high-value education

Goal 3- Sustain a diverse and inclusive campus community to support success and belonging

Goal 4- Deliver educational experiences that foster improved student success and belonging

Current WCC Projects

1. Mural
2. Book Club – Letters to Cristina: Reflection on Life and Work - Freire
3. Creating professional development on using language as a community-building strategy while incorporating extended family within the course.

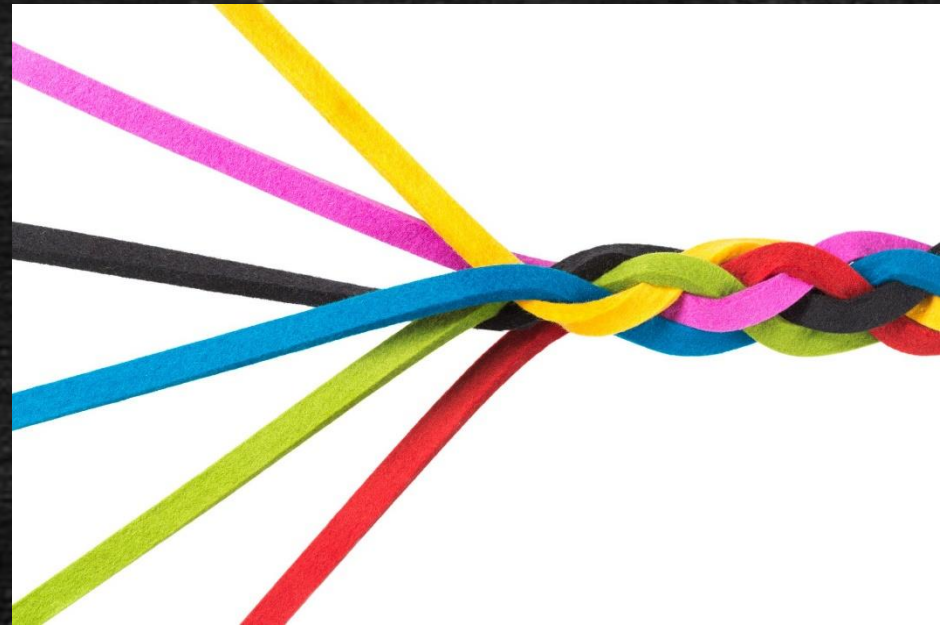
Connections beyond Whatcom

1. Teaching in the Two-Year College (article published in next issue)

Title: "Write From the Heart: (*Escribe desde el corazon*): Connect Lived Experiences to First-Year Curriculum"

2. Collaborative presentation for Faculty of Staff & Color Conference (centering stories).

2. Upcoming book chapter (collaborative piece with high school instructor about code-meshing strategies).



Our Collective Why

We believe creating a Latine Studies Area can contribute to building an inclusive campus by

- Challenging the feeling of isolation in academia
- Bringing visibility to Latine students on campus
- Promoting recognition and understanding of students' cultural values
- Addressing potential conflict between students' cultural values and academic practices



Group activity: Who are you? (2-3 minutes)

Please answer in one word or phrase: Who are you?

Note: Your answer can be evolving and does not have to be static (as my students pointed out).



Radical Empathy

Radical Empathy: Isabel Wilkerson



“Radical empathy, on the other hand, means putting in the work to educate oneself and to listen with a humble heart to understand another's experience from their perspective, not as we imagine we would feel. Radical empathy is not about you and what you think you would do in a situation you have never been in and perhaps never will. It is the kindred connection from a place of deep knowing that opens your spirit to the pain of another as they perceive it.

Empathy is no substitute for the experience itself. We don't get to tell a person with a broken leg or a bullet wound that they are not in pain. And people who have hit the caste lottery are not in a position to tell a person who has suffered under the tyranny of caste what is offensive or hurtful or demeaning to those at the bottom. The price of privilege is the moral duty to act when one sees another person treated unfairly. And the least that a person in the dominant caste can do is not make the pain any worse.”

Reflection & Discussion:

How do you visualize radical empathy in your life?

Take 4-5 minutes to jot down your thoughts and responses

Be prepared to share in a small group.



Family First and Extended families

Family is the most important value in Latin American culture

"Family first" (*la familia es primero*)

- Typically, in the Latin American culture, persons trust and respect their family members and extended family members
- To reduce academic isolation, students can be treated as an extended family

Student Examples

From final evaluative letter

"I also arrived at another sad realization that writing had become a selfless work chore. In the pursuit of managing corporate chaos, emails, and presentations were so professional polished and reminiscent that my voice was lost along the way. I was dumbfounded and must have stared blankly at the first assignments to simply write about our life. It was uncomfortable to start writing or sharing at any level. My own advice to my sons, "To be authentic is to be boldly vulnerable reminded me to apply the same advice for my own writing."


Student Spotlight: Sophia Grubbs (International Student)

WCC Women's Volleyball Player of the Year 2023-2024

"I would say my favorite part of Whatcom Women's Volleyball is our team culture. Everyone treats everyone like family."

*Treating WCC students, faculty, and staff as extended family will build team building skills, trust, and community.

Sofia was in "our" ENGLISH 101 class.



STUDENT
Spotlight

Sophia Grubbs (International Student)
2025 Communications Student
WCC Women's Volleyball Team
WCC Women's Volleyball Player of the Year - 2023-2024



Why did you choose WCC?
I have two primary reasons for choosing Whatcom. First, the resources provided for all of the students. I think that services such as the Learning Center, the Makerspace, the Math Center, and the Writing Center makes Whatcom unique. Not all colleges help students with those resources. Secondly, I was excited when I discovered how helpful everyone was on the campus. Each time I visited the campus, every person I "bumped into" went out of their way to offer their help with anything I might need. Even those times I just showed up unexpectedly, someone went out of their way to welcome me to campus. It really meant a lot to my family and me to feel welcomed. Of course, the scenery and liveliness of Bellingham doesn't hurt!

What program or area are you studying?
I am studying Communications. I will hopefully graduate in spring 2025 with my associates!

What was it like being an international student and how was your transition from Japan to Washington State?
It definitely took some getting used to. Moving so far away from my family and friends was especially hard, but being a part of the WCC women's volleyball team was helpful. I had people who I could talk to if needed, as well as just showing me around Bellingham. When I visited Whatcom for the first time, before I met the volleyball coach, I was shown around and met a bunch of different groups and clubs. So, with or without volleyball, I knew I would always be supported here.

How have you built community here at Whatcom?
I think college really is what you make of it, and I try to be as involved as possible. Cedar Hall hosts events almost every other week so I try to make it to those when I can. That's a great way to meet people in the same situation I am. I also love going to other sports games to show my support and cheer along with the rest of Whatcom!

What is one of your favorite things at Whatcom Community College?
I think one of my favorite events here at Whatcom is Orca Day! There are food trucks, face painting, caricature artists, and some other activities. It's an all day thing so no matter what time your classes were you could still get in on the fun. I loved seeing everyone out there with friends, meeting new people, and enjoying themselves!

What is your favorite part about being on WCC's Women's Volleyball Team?
I would say my favorite part of Whatcom Women's Volleyball is our team culture. Everyone treats everyone like family, which I really needed my first couple of months in college. The first month when I was at Whatcom it was preseason, so all I had to do was hang out with a great group of girls, play my favorite sport, and explore Bellingham. It was a good time!

What is your experience being an international student at Whatcom? Any advice for upcoming international students?
I was lucky because I knew I was meeting new people right away and would be on a team. Not every international student will have that. My advice would be to try to be as involved as possible. WCC has some great clubs and events where you can meet some awesome people. There are "friends" everywhere. You simply have to introduce yourself to them! Everyone I have met so far has been kind and helpful, so try to branch out as much as you can!

What are you planning for the future?
Once I have my associates I'm hoping to transfer to a four-year college where I can continue to play volleyball! I am looking all around the U.S., so let me know if you have a suggestion!

Takeaway/*un regalito* (a little gift)



Progressive Change: Golden rule vs. Platinum rule

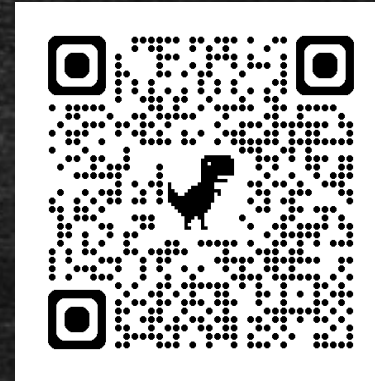
Golden rule is great:

"Treat others as you would want to be treated"

Please consider the platinum rule:

"Do unto others as they want done to them."

Let's Connect!



Check out
our Latine
Studies
WCC
Webpage!

Reach out to us to offer insights and suggestions on the development of the Latine Studies Area!

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Let's network with faculty and staff interested in supporting the Latine Studies Area!

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