



Carlos A. Benitez Cruz

 Doctoral Student

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EDUCATION

present **University of Illinois Chicago (UIC)**
M.A./Ph.D. in Community Psychology
Department of Psychology

2021 **Dominican University (DU)**
B.A. in Psychology and Study of Women & Gender
Degree with Distinction and Honors
Summa Cum Laude

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTES

- Patriarchal Violence
- Community, Systems, and Policy Change
- Theory
- Gender & Sexuality
- Racial Categories and Racialization
- Community Psychology
- Social Justice
- Systems of Oppression

CONFERENCE & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

*Cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic

1. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (2022). *At the CUSPP of a New Era: Creating a Space for Undocumented Scholars*. Midwestern Eco Conference, online.
2. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, and Montesinos, E. (2022). *"Beyond" Psychology: Community Research and Action*. Mini-Conference for Undocumented Psychologists, online.
3. Malone, S., DeViera, A., Cutler, C., and **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (2021). *Planting New Seeds: Mobilizing Anti-Colonial and Anti-Carceral Pedagogy and Training in Psychology*. Uprooting Carceral Psychology: Healing Justice Conference, online.
4. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (2021). *Disrupting Sexist Ideologies and Behaviors: An Evaluation of a Mixed-Approach Sexual Assault Prevention Program*. Undergraduate Research Study and Creative Investigation (URSCI) Expo, River Forest, IL.
5. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, and Garcia, K. (2021). *Gender Inequality and Sexism, A Conceptual Replication of Powell et al.* Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.*
6. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (2021). *Beyond DREAMers and Saints: Discussing Illegal Alien and Radical UndocuQueer Potential*. URSCI Expo, online.
7. Cheng, S., **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, Duarte, G., Lopez-Benitez F. Y., and Ibarra, R. L. (2021). *Truth as We Speak It: Navigating Personal and Institutional Violence*. Women and Gender Studies Conference, online.
8. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, and Arroyo, L. (2020). *Centering UndocuVoices: How to be an Ally to Undocumented Students*. Association for Latino Professionals of America (ALPFA) Latinx Conference, online.
9. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (2020). *Men's Project at Dominican University*. URSCI Expo, River Forest, IL.
10. **Benitez Cruz, C.A.**, and Garcia, K. (2020). *Gender Inequality and Sexism, A Conceptual Replication of Powell et al.* Undergraduate Research Study and Creative Investigation (URSCI) Expo, River Forest, IL.
11. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, and Arias, I. (2019). *Gender Inequality and Sexism, A Conceptual Replication of Powell et al. – A Pilot Study*. Women and Gender Studies Conference, River Forest, IL.
12. Diaz, J., **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, Jones, M., Kimbrough, D., Rodriguez, B., and Villegas, L. (2019). *On the Global Oppression of Women, Student Panel*. Women and Gender Studies Conference, River Forest, IL.
13. Diaz, L., **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, and Hernandez, Y. (2019). *DREAM.US - Undocumented Student Panel*. Caritas Veritas Symposium, River Forest, IL.
14. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.**, and Hernandez, D. (2019). *Nothing About Us Without Us: Combatting Ageism at Universities*.

Sharing the Dream Conference, DeKalb, IL.

INVITED TALKS, GUEST LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

1. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (November, 2022). Guest Lecture: *Painting Illegality: Using Art to Reconcile the Past, Meditate on the Present, and Imagine the Future*. LALS 420, Undocumented Social Movements. University of Illinois Chicago, Chicago, IL.
2. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (September, 2022). Invited Story: *Illegal Alien: The Radical Narrative of an UndocuQueer*. Racial Equity Week, Cook County Government, online.
3. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (June, 2022). Invited Story: *Querida Gloria*. Pour One Out, Storytelling Series, Chicago, IL.
4. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (March, 2022). Workshop: *Breaking Down Masculinity and Leadership*. Black and Brown Male Summit at Harry S. Truman College, Chicago, IL.
5. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (February, 2021). Invited Talk: *Reflection on Being Undocumented, DACA, and the Struggle for Immigrant Justice*. Arrupe Program, Boston College.
6. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (October, 2020). Invited Story: *In this brown skin*. Truths through my body: This is America, Storytelling Series, Chicago, IL.
7. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (February, 2019). Invited Story: *Father, brother, mother: (un)Becoming Macho*. Am I Man Enough? Storytelling Series, Chicago, IL.
8. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (October, 2019). Invited Talk: *Fears and Epiphanies: Undocumented, Queer in the Diaspora*. Guest storyteller, Nowhere in the Diaspora: Storytelling Series, Chicago, IL.
9. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (February, 2019). Guest Lecture: *A Crash Course on Sex, Gender, and Sexuality*. LAS 105, First-year Seminar, Dominican University, River Forest, IL.
10. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (March, 2019). Guest Lecture: *Deconstruyendo la Caja de la Masculinidad*. SPAN 325, Intro to Hispanic Cinema, Dominican University, River Forest, IL.
11. **Benitez Cruz, C. A.** (March, 2019). Invited Workshop: *Lead Like a Man: Gendered Leadership and Overcoming Toxic Masculinity as a Leader*, Dominican University, River Forest, IL.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

1. CBS News (2022, October). *Justice Department vows to defend DACA policy after court rules against it*.
2. WBEZ Chicago, NPR. (2022, June). *'I don't call myself a dreamer. I'm just an undocumented person.'*

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2021-present **Graduate Research Assistant**

Gender Justice Initiative, UIC Psychology Department

- Assist team on research that focuses on improving system responses to sexual assault and gender-based violence led by PI Dr. Jessica Shaw.
- 4 hours per week.

2022 **Research Assistant**

Black Scholar Series, UIC Psychology Department

- Responsible for cleaning, labeling, and conceptualizing large database.
- Developed descriptive tables for final report.
- Aid in other clerical tasks regarding programing, data, and delivery of analyses.
- 18 hours per week.

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- 2022 **Research Assistant**
Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education
- Drafted literature review to support a program aiding the reentry of previously incarcerated men of color into higher education in free society.
 - Developed qualitative interview protocols for higher education staff, social workers, and prospective students who were previously incarcerated.
 - 10 hours per week.
- 2019 - 2021 **Degree with Distinction and Honors Project**
Disrupting Sexist Ideologies, DU Department of Psychology
- Adapted and revised a primary sexual assault prevention program to a ten-week credit-bearing course at DU (listed as *SJCE 205: Men and Masculinities*).
 - Approved by Department of Justice under the CASE-SAP grant; if proven effective, the program would be recommended for campus wide implementation.
 - Collaborate and communicate with on and off-campus partners to build course lectures and activities.
 - Worked with primary course instructor in delivering class material and leading class discussions.
 - Collected and analyzed pre- and post-data to evaluate the efficacy of the program in activating students against sexism and empowering students to prevent and intervene in sexist and potentially sexually violent situations.
- 2019 - 2020 **Independent Research Project**
Gender Inequality Framing and Sexism, DU Department of Psychology
- Administered surveys to understand how the framing of gender inequality affected reported sexism in college aged men.
 - Gathered, analyzed, and interpreted data on men's beliefs.
- 2019 **Research Assistant**
Promising Pathways Initiative at Dominican University, DU Department of Psychology
- Developed coding scheme to interpret Promising Pathways Initiative (PPI) qualitative data.
 - Applied coding scheme to PPI student responses.
 - Interpreted themes and experiences of students to better understand their first-year experience.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

- Spring 2023 **Teaching Assistant, PSCH 343 Statistical Methods in Behavioral Science**
Undergraduate course; Two discussion sections; 40 students
- Fall 2022 **Teaching Assistant, PSCH 411 Psychology of Racism**
Undergraduate/Graduate course; Main grading responsibilities; 20 students
- Teaching Assistant, PSCH 343 Statistical Methods in Behavioral Science**
Undergraduate course; One discussion section; 20 students
- Summer 2022 **Teaching Assistant, PSCH 231 Community Psychology**
Undergraduate course; Main grading responsibilities; 43 students
- Spring 2022 **Teaching Assistant, PSCH 343 Statistical Methods in Behavioral Science**
Undergraduate course; Two discussion sections; 42 students
- Teaching Assistant, PSCH 231 Community Psychology**
Undergraduate course; Main grading responsibilities; 150 students

Fall 2021 **Teaching Assistant, PSCH 343 Statistical Methods in Behavioral Science**
Undergraduate course; One discussion section; 20 students

Teaching Assistant, PSCH 242 Introduction to Research in Psychology
Undergraduate course; One Discussion Section; 25 students
DOMINICAN UNIVERISTY

Spring 2021 **Co-Instructor, SJCE 205 Men & Masculinities**
Undergraduate course; One section; 7 students.

Fall 2019 **Peer Mentor/Teacher Assistant, LAS 108 Identity Blueprint**
Undergraduate course; One Section; 24 students

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2019 - 2021 **Immigrant Student Support Specialist**

Center for Cultural Liberation (CCL) & El Centro, Dominican University

- Provided clerical support to the Director of El Centro and the CCL for immigration related issues and student cases.
- Planned, executed, and evaluated programs, workshops, and events to center undocumented immigrant experience and inform immigrant students of on-campus and local resources.
- Assisted undocumented students with issues pertaining to their legal status.
- Created and actualized an UndocuStudent Student (Advising & Resource) Handbook.

2019 - 2021 **Resident Assistant**

Student Life Office, Dominican University

- Created and maintained a safe and inclusive community in the Residence Halls.
- Communicated and support resident students experiencing academic, social, and emotional challenges.
- Acted as first-responder in the case of emergencies, distressing situations, and safety concerns.
- Upheld University and Housing policies and procedures.

2018 - 2020 **Orientation Leader**

Student Success and Engagement, Dominican University

- Facilitated first-year and transfer students' acclimation to DU.
- Communicated and upheld the expectations and standards of DU.
- Supported various offices at the university in administrative tasks.
- Decorated campus facilities to welcome students.
- Provided English-Spanish translation support for parents, families, and DU staff.

2018 -2019 **Scholarship Assistant**

El Centro, Dominican University

- Compiled available scholarships for students at DU.
- Met and advised students to apply for scholarships.
- Shared school resources and direct students to appropriate offices for support.
- Developed workshops and information sessions to help student success.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2021-present **Leadership Team Member & Social Media Coordinator**

Coalition of Undocumented Scholars & Professionals in Psychology (CUSPP)

2021-present **Department of Psychology, GEO Steward**

Graduate Employees Organization (GEO)

2023 **Expert Reviewer**
Roman & Littlefield Publishing Company

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

2021-present **Volunteer**
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council

2021 **Lead Organizer**
Beyond Borders Showcase 2021

2019 - 2021 **Member, Student Representative**
Sanctuary Campus Subcommittee, DU

2019 - 2021 **Undocumented & Immigrant Allyance Student Representative**
President's Advisory Council, Dominican University

2018 - 2021 **Member and Student Leader Liaison**
Coordinated Community Response Team, DU Wellness Center

2017 - 2021 **President**
Undocumented & Immigrant Allyance, DU

2017 - 2020 **Volunteer**
Proyecto de acción de los suburbios del oeste (PASO), Melrose Park

2019 **Co-Creator and Lead Organizer**
Monarch(a) Showcase 2019

2019 **Teaching Fellow**
Our Whole Lives (OWL) Program, Oak Park

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

2018 - 2021 Adelante Scholarship

2017 - 2021 Dominican University Presidential Award

2017 - 2021 DREAM.US National Scholarship

2020 Undergraduate Research and Creative Investigation (URSCI) Summer Grant

2019 Undergraduate Research and Creative Investigation (URSCI) Summer Grant

2018 Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) National Scholarship

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

2021 Outstanding Senior Award – Study of Women & Gender

2020 Lincoln Academy Student Laureate Award

2020 St. Catherine Medal for Student Achievement

2020 Golden Star Leadership Award

2017 - 2020 DU Dean's List

2019 Golden Star Leadership Award

2018 DU Honor's List

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2022- *present* Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)
2021- *present* The Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA)
2020- 2022 The Lincoln Academy of Illinois
2020- 2022 Psi Chi International Honor Society

CERTIFICATIONS

2022 National Council for Behavioral Health - Mental Health First Aid
2021 Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault – 42 Hour Crisis Intervention Training

LANGUAGES

Spanish - Native proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing.
French – Intermediate proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing.