

DANIELA ANAIS CORTEZ BRAVO (SHE/HER/ELLA)

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EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) PhD in Education; Specialization in Higher Education	September 2025 – June 2029
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) MA in Higher Education and Organizational Change	September 2024 – June 2025
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Bachelor of Arts in Public Affairs Bachelor of Arts in Education and Social Transformation Overall GPA: 3.896	August 2020 – June 2024

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Hispanic-serving Institutions, operationalized *servingness*, Latinx cultural centers, first-generation college access and retention, student activism and advocacy, institutional transformation, sense of belonging, community cultural wealth, educational policy

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

UCLA Kern Regional K-16 Education Collaborative October 2024 - Present
Graduate Student Researcher, UCLA School of Education and Information Studies
Advisor: Dr. Christine Shen

- Collaborate with UCLA Kern Collaborative and partners to develop best practices for statewide college access and K-16 support, enhancing post-secondary coursework articulation and community engagement for high school students.
- Analyze evaluation data to recommend curriculum improvements and design inclusive digital learning experiences, fostering a strong community and increasing interest in careers in education.

Learning Together Student Voice Project July 2024 – August 2025
Student Researcher, UCLA School of Education and Information Studies
Advisor: Dr. Cecilia Rios-Aguilar

- Using Box and Microsoft Suite tools to clean transcriptions 30-minute to an hour-long semi-structured interview dialogues with attention to detail.
- Using Dedoose, a qualitative coding tool, to deductively analyze the cleaned transcripts in search for common themes that are relevant to the research aims of the community stakeholders.
- Participate in collective researcher convenings to reflect on data analysis in progress and continuously revise codes.

Declaration for American Democracy. June 2023 – September 2023
Congress Watch Intern, Public Citizen
Advisors: Cecilia Bernard and Christine Wood

- Conducted research on small-donor matching policies and legislation applicable to political campaigns in cities across the United States, such as Portland, ME, Seattle, WA, New York State, and California.

- Utilized public government political campaign donations databases to conduct statistical analysis on public financing patterns in Minnesota state elections, across zip codes between the years of 2015-2022, on the basis of race and gender.
- Co-authored a synthesized brief for a campaign coalition in Minnesota, We Choose Us, Minnesota, to support their research in preparation for legislative advocacy.

UCLA Educators for Tomorrow Research Program

January 2023 – June 2023

Undergraduate Research Fellow, UCLA Academic Advancement Program

Advisors: Dr. Gabriela Corona Valencia and Cassi Colangelo

- Consulted research databases, such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and the UCLA Library to sort through relevant peer-reviewed literature on student activism, institutional responses, and institutional betrayal of marginalized students in higher education institutions. Conducted informational interviews with scholars to further my literature search.
- Used document collection and engaged critical media analysis to derive findings.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UCLA Future Educators STEAM Externship Course

June 2025 – August 2025

Instructor, UCLA School of Education and Information Studies

Advisor: Dr. Christine Shen

- Designed curriculum for and facilitated six live training sessions for four high school and community college students, implementing interactive strategies such as Zoom breakout room discussions, reflective activities, virtual chat and group-wide dialogue to build effective mentorship skills and foster engagement.
- Developed lesson plans and multi-modal educational materials for a professional development course delivered via Zoom to a cohort of four Kern County students as part of a free, six-week UCLA summer program and STEAM Externship
- Supported students' professional development by modeling collaboration, leadership, and educational communication skills, preparing them for hands-on STEAM field placements at education sites like STEAM Yard, CALM, Buena Vista Museum, and Kern County Museum during the externship experience

UCLA Kern Regional K-16 Education Collaborative

June 2023 – August 2023

Co-Instructor, UCLA School of Education and Information Studies

Advisor: Dr. Christine Shen

- Co-facilitated three training for incoming mentors through use of interactive group strategies, such as small group discussions, reflection, and multi-modal engagement (virtual chat usage and group-wide dialogue).
- Developed lesson plans, learning materials, and facilitated small-group discussions of a 6 high school student cohort through Zoom in a free, remote, dual enrollment program available to students in Kern County.

UCLA First Years' Scholars Program

September 2021 – June 2022

Peer Mentor, UCLA College Academic Advising

Advisors: Dr. Ana Karina Reis, Dr. Alexandra Terrones, and Omar Torres

- Co-facilitated weekly lectures for first-generation, low-income first year students to support retention and empowerment.

- Fostered 1-1 connections with students through 30-minute academic, community-based, and professional counseling sessions twice a quarter, with personalized advising and accessible information catered to first-gen experience.

Breakthrough Silicon Valley

January 2017 – June 2017

After School Program Instructor, Sylvandale Middle School

Advisor: David Tarula and Christina Tran-Kenyon

- Facilitated courses on Morals and Ethics and Real World (Math) Problems with 3 groups of 8-10 seventh grade students, twice, weekly
- Cultivated a safe and open space for students, as well as academic support with weekly tutor sessions

Breakthrough Silicon Valley

June 2018 – August 2018

Teaching Fellow, Santa Clara University

Advisor: Delrish White, M. Ed

- Collaborated with 6 other colleagues to develop and enact concrete lesson plans over the course of 6 weeks on literary skills, such as annotations, comprehensive reading, and analysis.
- Supported seventh and eighth graders in preparation for the upcoming school year through team building activities, rigorous academics, and public speaking development.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

UCLA Hispanic-Serving Institution

April 2023 – October 2024

Student Liaison, Los Angeles, CA

- Advocated for student needs and conducted targeted outreach to engage students with a cultural and asset-based lens; Established a Student Advisory Board for communication between students and administration.
- Facilitated programming to inform HSI goals through student town halls, and student summits, two student collaborative groups, and collaborations with 60+ campus units and student organizations to promote student engagement

Breakthrough Silicon Valley

June 2023 – August 2023

Marketing and Communications Intern, San Jose, CA

- Engaged with first-generation students and aspiring educators through semi-structured interviews and storytelling. Authored 6 student and teaching fellow profiles to capture their journeys.
- Devised media strategies that elevate BTSV's central mission on college access to nourish relationships with future partners through LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, company visits, and networking.

San Jose Cal-SOAP

August 2020 – August 2021

College Success Advisor, San Jose, CA

- Connected with over 200 students through phone banking, 1:1 appointment, and social media outreach, and was awarded the Extra Mile Award for efforts.
- Created and co-led 4 weekly workshops for about 200 marginalized students on financial aid and literacy, college applications, college acclimation, and more college-access related topics to promote a college-going culture.

- Transformed and directed a 7-person team to manage a 252 social media platform to provide student resources distributed in collaboration with UCSC Educational Partnership Center, TRiO, and CSAC.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Associated Students UCLA

June 2025 - Present

Board Member and Services Sub-Committee Chair, Los Angeles, CA

- Serve as an active voting member of the ASUCLA Board of Directors, overseeing a \$80M+ student union enterprise including UCLA's retail, dining, and student services operations.
- Chair the Services Sub-Committee, leading discussions and initiatives to improve and expand services supporting UCLA students' academic, social, and personal well-being.
- Analyze and provide recommendations on proposals related to facilities, student services programming, and long-term strategic planning for ASUCLA.
- Facilitate collaboration among board members, ASUCLA senior management, and student stakeholders to ensure transparent decision-making and effective governance.
- Advocate for equitable and inclusive services by centering student needs in policy deliberations and budget priorities.

Latino Education Advancement Program

September 2024 – Present

Mentor, San Jose, CA

- Curate personalized academic and socioemotional advising support to a cohort of 5 undergraduate Latinx students from the East San Jose region, meeting on a monthly basis to check in on academic progress, social integration, and support student basic needs.
- Manage a personal database through Notion to track interactions with students and provide thorough reports after each interaction with each individual student to supervisor.
- Attend quarterly mentorship trainings to develop robust advising skills and professionalism.

Breakthrough Silicon Valley

January 2024 – May 2024

Application Screener, San Jose, CA

- Conducted systematic reviews of student applications to the BTSV program with thorough consideration of students' socioeconomic status and higher education pursuits.
- Facilitated 30-minute interviews with students and parents, where I built rapport with the family, assess their fit into the program, and provided additional support as an alumna.

UCLA Latinx Admit Weekend

October 2023 – June 2024

Logistics Subcommittee Member, Los Angeles, CA

- Nourished relationships with Latinx UCLA alumni to recruit program speakers and volunteers
- Managed communications between admitted students, volunteers, and alumni leading up to the event, such as phone banking 50+ students, designing and facilitating volunteer training workshops, and guiding alumni to our event and on the day of.

UCLA Kern Regional K-16 Education Collaborative

April 2023 – June 2023

Mentorship Program Development Committee, Los Angeles, CA

- Developed mentorship orientation training on community cultural wealth, asset-based perspectives, and positionality when working with students of marginalized backgrounds.

- Devised a mentor recruitment strategy to distribute applications, expand tactical campus-wide outreach, and thorough screening processes that onboarded 12 mentors.

ADVOCACY EXPERIENCE

UCLA Undergraduate Student Association Council

May 2022 – May 2023

Academic Affairs Commissioner, Los Angeles, CA

- Outreached, recruited, and onboarded over 30 directors and over 25 Academic Senators to support important Commission-specific and campus-wide initiatives by amplifying student voice with diverse, equitable, and inclusive values through culturally relevant programming.
- Enhanced student retention, mental health, post-grad opportunities and access to higher education through grant funding of over \$30,000 and new programming such as Grad Prep Book Rental program and Post-Grad Visibility week.

UCLA Academic Senate

September 2021 – June 2023

Academic Senator, Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Relations to Schools;

Undergraduate Council, Los Angeles, CA

- Advised the Committee on Undergraduate Admission and Relations to Schools through educational policy analysis and feedback from a student perspective, pertaining matters on A-G and IGETC, Ethnic Studies, and SAT/ACT removal.
- Reviewed extensive reports on policies from the UC Board of Admissions and Relations to Schools to effectively advocate as a student representative.
- Supported the Undergraduate Council through review and analysis of policies from departments across the university, proposals for new majors and minors, and college academic advising policies.

Southern California College Action Network

December 2021 – December 2022

“Changemaker” Fellow, Los Angeles, CA

- Collaborated with students, policy analyst, and California Student Aid Commission to collect, interpret statistical data, and develop statewide, higher-education policy strategy to expand access to Dream Service Incentive Grant.
- Implemented week-long Instagram campaign, co-authored 1 opinion-editorial article, and qualitative surveys with higher education professionals to uplift first-generation, undocumented/AB540 college students.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Hogar de Resistencia: Empowering Latinx Students within US Public Higher Education Landscapes

Principal Investigator, Los Angeles, CA

October 2025 – Present

- Conducting a literature review on the organizational structure of Latinx cultural centers and how they contribute to student sense of belonging. This project explores the application of counterspace theory and sense of belonging frameworks.

Cultural Warriors: Institutional Agents and Latinx Cultural Centers Paving the Way to Belonging and Success for Latinx Students at Four-Year Public Universities

Principal Investigator, San Jose, CA

October 2025 – Present

- Conducting a qualitative study on how knowledge held by staff at Latinx cultural centers contributes to institutional transformation, sense of belonging and student success. This project explores the application of counterspace theory and sense of belonging frameworks.

PUBLICATIONS

- Amaya, D. R., Rios-Aguilar, C., **Cortez Bravo, D.**, Gomez, M., Guzman, N., Gardner, H., Castruita, C., Salazar, R. (2025). Student Voice Project: Glendale Community College Final Brief. UCLA School of Education & Information Studies.
- Hurtado, S., Almora Rios, M., Jaimez, A., Esquivel, D., Gutierrez, G., Carrasco, A., Granados, J., Sims, J., & **Cortez Bravo, D.** (in progress). From the liminal phase to empowering dissertation progress: Individual and collective strategies for navigating the transition. Manuscript in preparation for submission to IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS

- Cortez Bravo, D., **“The Road to Transformation: Institutionalizing Student Agency in Hispanic-Serving Institutions,”** poster presentation, UCLA Public Affairs Capstone Showcase, 2024 June, Los Angeles, CA.
- Cortez Bravo, D., Barrueta., K., **“Creciendo UCLA E-HSI: Emerging through Emergence of Student Centricity in HSI efforts from the Start,”** oral presentation, Alliance for Hispanic Serving Institution Educators 2024 Best Practices Conference, 2024 April, Monterey CA.
- Cortez Bravo, D., **“To Whom This May Concern: Students will no longer be your Collateral Damage,”** oral presentation, UCLA Undergraduate Research Week, 2023 May, Los Angeles, CA.

ACADEMIC HONORS AND AWARDS

- UCLA School of Education and Information Studies, Gordon and Olga Smith Award 2025-2026
- UCLA Competitive Edge Doctoral Student Transition Program 2025
- Charles F. Scott Award, granted by UCLA Graduate Division 2024-2025
- University fellowship, granted by UCLA Division of Graduate Education 2024-2025
- Educators for Tomorrow Research Fellow 2023
- Poder de la Mujer, granted by UCLA Hermanas Unidas 2021
- Dean’s Honors List, granted at UCLA 2021-2024
- 10,000 Degrees Scholarship, granted by the 10,000 Degrees Nonprofit 2020- 2024
- Becklam Scholarship, granted by the Becklam Foundation 2020-2025
- Academic Honors, awarded by the UCLA Academic Advancement Freshmen/Transfer Summer Program 2020
- Extra Mile Award, awarded by San Jose Cal-SOAP 2020
- California State Seal in Spanish Biliteracy 2020
- Santa Clara County Office of Education recognition for Spanish Biliteracy 2020

LANGUAGE SKILLS

- English (fully fluent)
- Spanish (fully fluent)

TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS

- Dedoose qualitative coding software
- Taguette qualitative coding software
- Jamovi
- Qualtrics
- Google Drive
- Microsoft Suite
- Zoom and Google Meet
- Canva
- Wordpress