

The Immigration and Border Community Research Experience for Undergraduate (REU) Site Program
National Science Foundation – Award # 1659195

May 20-July 27, 2019

New Mexico State University, Las Cruces and University of Texas-El Paso

Overview

This REU program is a unique opportunity for students to learn social science research methods while collaborating with local organizations to conduct in-depth research about the unique challenges faced by border communities in the Paso del Norte region of southern New Mexico, El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. This is a collaborative program between researchers at New Mexico State University (NMSU) and the University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP), fully funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). By collaborating closely with organizations already involved in advocacy for civil and human rights, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the Hope Border Institute and the Border Network for Human Rights, students' work will have a greater impact. Sample topics include:

- The impacts of Operation Streamline on the processing of unauthorized immigrants
- Alleged abuse and mistreatment of migrants and community members by law enforcement
- Asylum seekers in the borderlands: Access to due process and human rights
- “Know Your Rights” campaigns
- The history of community organizing and leadership development in the borderlands

Students will attend and participate in the activities noted below. They will also complete and submit to Dr. Harvey and Dr. Slack three products by July 27, 2019:

1. A journal of daily reflections on their experiences of program activities
2. An individually authored reflection paper on the main lessons to be taken from this program
3. A group project that demonstrates collaboration with the assigned community partner through the use of community-based participatory research (CBPR)

Students will be supported through weekly debriefings and ongoing advice by a team of seven faculty members from NMSU and UTEP, including the two program directors, or principal investigators: Dr. Neil Harvey, NMSU: nharvey@nmsu.edu and Dr. Jeremy Slack, UTEP: jmslack@utep.edu

The faculty mentors are Dr. Cynthia Bejarano (Interdisciplinary Studies) and Dr. Sabine Hirschauer (Government) at NMSU; and Dr. Joe Heyman, Dr. Gina Nunez and Dr. Cristina Morales (Sociology & Anthropology) at UTEP.

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Program of activities

Week 1:

5/19 Arrival to El Paso airport and transport to Las Cruces (NMSU campus)

5/20 NMSU Campus, Breland Hall 179: 10 am – 12 noon – introductions and overview of program

12-1.03 lunch (NMSU campus)

1.00-5.00 complete hiring paperwork, etc. tour of campus and Las Cruces

5/21 Workshop #1 on asylum, refugees and current impacts of policy

10 am – 12 noon at UTEP – Dept of Sociology and Anthropology - followed by lunch and tour of El Paso

5/22 Workshop # 3 on qualitative research methods and Community Based Participatory Research

10 am – 12 noon at NMSU, Las Cruces – Breland 179 – followed by lunch and meetings with community partners in Las Cruces

5/23 Meetings with community partners in El Paso. The assignment of students to the different projects and community partner organizations will be made after these meetings.

5/24 free day to begin working on project ideas with community partners

Saturday 5/25 Border Network for Human Rights event in El Paso – March for Migrants (optional)

Week 2: 5/27-

No work on Memorial Day, 5/27

5/28 Workshop #4 on writing a daily journal and conducting interviews

10 am – 12 noon at UTEP, Dept of Sociology and Anthropology, followed by lunch and meetings with community partners

5/29 lunch with faculty mentors and whole team (location TBD)

5/30 Workshop# 5 – designing your research project: research questions, data collection and analysis

10.00 – 12.00 at Breland Hall 179, NMSY Las Cruces campus

5/31 freed day to work on projects with community partners

Weeks 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 (June 3 through July 5) will be dedicated to carrying out research. The team will meet each Friday for debriefing over lunch or evening meal, alternating between Las Cruces and El Paso. Details to be confirmed nearer the time.

Weeks 8 and 9 (July 8 though 19) will be dedicated to data analysis, the writing and editing of drafts of individual and group papers.

Week 10 (July 22-26) will be dedicated to making oral presentations of research findings with the rest of the students in the team, as well as with faculty mentors and representatives of community partners.

There will be a farewell reception on Friday July 26.

Assigned readings:

1. Asylum Processing and Waitlists at the US-Mexico Border, December 2018. Report by the Robert Strauss Center and the Center for US-Mexican Studies at University of California-San Diego (UCSD).
2. Hope Border Institute, Border Observatory 2019: Hope and Resilience at the Border. El Paso, 2019. Available at:
https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/e07ba9_6548ef1b4a064f2e8ec27a66ca909f78.pdf
3. Slack, Jeremy et al. The Geography of Border Militarization. Journal of Latin American Geography, vol 15, no. 1, 2016

In addition, please make yourself familiar with the work of our community partners by visiting their websites:

www.bnhr.org

www.hopeborder.org

<https://www.aclu-nm.org/en/border-rights/regional-center-border-rights>

<http://organizenm.org/>

Recommended further readings will be provided when we start the program.