

Dear Campus Community,

It is with a mix of joy and sadness that we announce that Dr. Nancy Pérez has accepted a position at California State University, Northridge in the Department of Central American and Transborder Studies beginning this Fall 2024. Dr. Pérez joined the Department of Critical Race, Gender & Sexuality Studies (CRGS) in 2018 and in Spring 2024 was awarded tenure and promotion to Associate Professor at Cal Poly Humboldt.

Her research focuses on understanding Mexican and Central American migration, labor histories, and transnational cultures of memory and resistance from interdisciplinary perspectives. Her article, “Red Dust: Migration and Labor as Seismic Fractures to the Anthropocene” (Spring 2022), was included in a special issue on Chicana/o Environmental Justice. This work examines the intersections between immigrant labor, extractivism, and critical environmental justice. This piece engaged with community-based archives, which required building relationships with community members from the Montebello Historical Society in Los Angeles. This inspired other projects and has expanded her work to the fields of environmental humanities, prompting an invitation to be an editorial board member of *Regeneration: Environment, Art, Culture*, an upcoming digital environmental humanities, peer-reviewed journal contracted with the Open Library of the Humanities. Her past research examined the domestic worker experience, writing a thesis titled “Corpo(r)realities: Domestic Workers and Embodied Inscriptions of Power.” She has also researched the domestic worker rights movement in the U.S., publishing an article stemming from her dissertation titled “Migrant Domestic Workers and the Changing Landscape of Activism.” Nancy obtained her B.A. and M.A. degrees in Chicana/o Studies from California State University Northridge, and her Ph.D. in Justice Studies from Arizona State University.

Dr. Pérez made valuable contributions to the department, university, and the community. She was instrumental in the production of *CouRaGeous Cuentos*, a collection of multilingual personal reflections, testimonios, essays, manifestos, photography, and artwork. Since its first volume launched in 2016, the journal has grown to what seems like a *CouRaGeous Cuentos* movement under the leadership of Dr. Pérez. Audriana "Audri" Peñaloza, a student who worked closely with Dr. Pérez, reminds us that, “Each volume is unique in that it captures the struggles, movements, and spirit of the campus and local community, as well as the efforts by students to engage in action and create change. Their writings also offer insights into the multifaceted experiences, knowledge production, and organizing of students, their families, and communities.” The journal became so popular and much needed that Dr. Pérez developed a student journal

production course, ES 210 *Courageous Cuentos*, with annual publications that reside in our library's digital commons and are available in print. With the publication, she brought together many organizations and people on and off campus. Alongside Cal Poly Humboldt students, faculty, and staff, Dr. Pérez collaborated with the Promotorx Transformative Educators Program in the School of Education, Latinx students in local high schools, and community members. This impactful collaboration culminated in community events that celebrated underrepresented voices throughout Humboldt County. She expanded *Courageous Cuentos* in the last five years to emphasize student-community partnerships and has received grant funding to meet growing demand and participation. In related work, Dr. Pérez, in collaboration with Jody Smith, was awarded a \$25,000 grant for a project called *Courageous Cuentos Retrospective* for the 24-25 AY. This project will be launched in Spring 2025. For more information, see the CRGS website.

Dr. Pérez developed *Creando Raíces*, a Place-Based Student Learning Community (PBLC) as part of the Developing Hispanic Institutions Grant (DHSI) at Humboldt State University. As Faculty Lead, she was responsible for implementing changes that revised the vision and focus of the PBLC to one that strengthened the education, community, and social justice goals of the grant. These goals included supporting the academic achievement of our Latinx students and increasing the number and diversity of students interested in becoming educators and social justice advocates. Dr. Pérez put together a program of courses from Critical Race, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, Native American Studies, English, and Education that met general education requirements.

Dr. Pérez was instrumental in building the Ethnic Studies discipline in CRGS. She has taught *Chican@/Latinx Lives*, *The U.S. & Mexico Border*, *Chicano Culture and Society*, *Growing Up Chicano/Latinx*, and *Radical Futures: Race, Environment, and Social Justice* (a course she created). She served as co-chair of the Ethnic Studies Council where she helped lead the struggle to implement at Cal Poly Humboldt the aims of AB 1460, a statewide mandate that students take ethnic studies as a graduation requirement in the California State University system. She has served as an advisor to many CRGS students since she first arrived in 2018. Her advising work was crucial for student retention, especially among first-generation, Chican@/Latinx, queer, students of color.

While we are deeply disappointed that Cal Poly Humboldt did not find a way to keep Dr. Nancy Pérez at our university, we wish her much success and thank her for her profound contributions to our students, our department, and the wider Humboldt community.

From the Department of Critical Race, Gender & Sexuality Studies

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Assistant Professor, Paul Michael Leonardo Atienza

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