

Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar
The Pennsylvania State University
Department of Sociology and Criminology
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Academic Positions and Affiliations

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Sociology and Criminology,
The Pennsylvania State University, 2023 – Present

Postdoctoral Fellow Affiliate, Population Research Institute,
The Pennsylvania State University, 2023 – Present

Education

Ph.D. Sociology, **Rice University**, Houston, TX, May 2023

M.S. Applied Sociology, **University of Texas at Dallas**, Richardson, TX, 2014

Archer Center Graduate Program in Public Policy, **University of Texas System**,
Washington, D.C., Summer 2013

B.A. Corporate Communications and Public Affairs & Spanish,
Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX, 2009

Research Interests

Race and Ethnicity, Education, Stratification and Inequality, Research Design and Methods, Religion,
Urban and Community Sociology

Grants and Fellowships

Min Zhou Research Grant, Department of Sociology, Rice University, 2021 (\$1,500)

Dissertation Improvement Grant, *National Science Foundation*, 2020 (\$14,116, Grant #2001983).

Dissertation Fellowship, *Ford Foundation, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and
Medicine*, 2020-2021 (\$28,000).

Sociology Graduate Student Fellowship, *The Sociology of Science and Religion: Identity and Belief
Formation Funding Initiative*, 2021-2023 (\$56,500).

Minority Dissertation Fellowship, *American Educational Research Association*, 2020-2021
(\$19,000~declined).

Pathways to Leadership Program Travel Award, Society for the Social Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR), 2019-2021 (\$1,500)

Student Travel Grant, Society for the Social Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR), 2019 (\$710)

Graduate Student Association Travel Fund Grant, Rice University Social Sciences, 2019 (\$500)

Scholarship-Travel Grant, W.T. Grant Foundation, ASA Sociology of Education Section, 2018 (\$750)

Fellow, Graduate Archer Fellowship Program in Public Policy, *The University of Texas System*, 2013*

* Competitively selected from The University of Texas System for a Washington, D.C. internship and academic fellowship program.
-- Archer Fellowship Internship: The Education Trust, Higher Education Policy, Research and Practice Division

Honors and Awards

Honorable Mention, **Dissertation of the Year**, Religion and Education Section, American Educational Research Association (AERA), 2024

Wall and Helen Hall Best Graduate Student Paper Award, Department of Sociology, Rice University, 2023

Pathways to Leadership Program, Society for the Social Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR), 2019-2021

Honorable Mention, Graduate Research Fellowship Program, *National Science Foundation*, 2017

Scholar-Convening Invitee, Religion and Democracy, The Fetzer Institute, Kalamazoo, MI, 2017

Scholar-Convening Invitee, Unlocking Latino Millennial Civic Potential, The Aspen Institute's Latinos and Society Program, Aspen, CO, 2016*

* Report produced as result of convening: The Aspen Institute. 2016. "Activating Latino Millennial Civic Power," Washington, D.C.: U.S.

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Initiated 2014

Publications

Peer-Reviewed

Thomson, Robert A., **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2021. "The Very Ivory Tower: Pathways Reproducing Racial-Ethnic Stratification in Science." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30:1-21.

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, Brandon Vaidyanathan, Elaine Howard Ecklund, and Adriana Garcia. 2019. "Challenging Evolution in Public Schools: Race, Religion, and Attitudes toward Teaching Creationism." *Socius: Sociological Research in a Dynamic World* 5:1-13.

Sánchez, Esmeralda, Nicholas Vargas, Rebecca Burwell, Jessica Hamar-Martinez, Milagros Peña, and Edwin I. Hernandez. 2016. "Latino Congregations and Youth Educational Expectations." *Sociology of Religion* 77(2): 171-92.*

***REPRINTED** 2018. In *Sociology of Religion: A Reader, Third Edition*, edited by Susanne Monahan, William Mirola, and Michael O. Emerson. New York: Routledge.

Reports

Holzman, Brian, Mehreen Gul, **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, and Camila Cigarroa Kennedy. 2020. "Part II: Labor Market Analyses of the 60×30 Goal, Supply and Demand, and Wages in Houston and Texas," *Houston Longitudinal Study on the Transition to College and Work (HLS)*
<https://kinder.rice.edu/research/transitioning-college-and-work-part-3-labor-market-analyses-houston-and-texas>
Featured in: *Houston Chronicle, Texas Standard, San Antonio Express-News*

Holzman, Brian, **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, and Irina Chukhray. 2020. "Inequalities in Postsecondary Attainment by English Learner Status: The Role of College-Level Course-Taking,"
<https://kinder.rice.edu/sites/g/files/bxs1676/f/documents/Inequalities%20in%20Postsecondary%20Attainment.pdf>

Chukhray, Irina and **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**. 2019. "Harris County's College Advising Needs," <https://kinder.rice.edu/research/harris-county%E2%80%99s-college-advising-needs>

Under Review

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, Sharan Mehta, and Esther Chan, "Comparing Confidence in Institutions Among Latino and White Catholics and Evangelicals." *Revise and Resubmit*

Papers in Progress

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, "Latino Religious Familism and Proximity: How Religion Matters for Latino College Choices."

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, "Religious Participation as Predictor of Latino College Course-Taking Patterns and Enrollment."

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, "Unexamined Dimensions of Latino STEM Stratification: Latinos, Religion and STEM Outcomes."

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, Robert J. Thomson, and Elaine Howard Ecklund, “Race, Religion and Education Policy: Unexamined Dimensions of Support for National Educational Spending and Interest in Local School Issues.”

Holzman, Brian, **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, and Irina Chukhray, “Inequalities in Educational Attainment by English Learner Status: A Case of Leveled Tracking.”

Invited Talks

“Latino Religious Familism and Proximity: How Religious Organizations Matter for Latino College Choices,” Higher Education Program Speaker Series, College of Education, The Pennsylvania State University, March 2024

“Latino Religious Familism and Proximity: How Religion Matters for Latino College Choices,” Department of Sociology Colloquium Series, University of Texas at Arlington, October 2022

“What Churches Can Do to Support Latino Youth College Aspirations,” Religion and Public Life Program at Rice University, Religious and Civic Leaders Gathering, January 2022

“Latino Evangelicals in America: Faith, Politics and Education,” Denton Independent School District, Boniuk Institute for the Study and Advancement of Religious Tolerance, August 2021

“Latino Evangelicals in America: Faith, Politics and Education,” Boniuk Institute for the Study and Advancement of Religious Tolerance, February 2021

“How Religious Organizations Can Respond to Educational Inequality in a Time of COVID,” Religion and Public Life Program at Rice University, September 2020

“New Results from the Fourth Wave of the National Congregations Study,” Association for the Sociology of Religion Conference, August 2020 (canceled due to pandemic)

“Latino Evangelicals in America and Texas: Women, Faith and Politics,” Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance, November 2019

“Religion and Educational Inequality,” Religion and Public Life Program at Rice University, Religious and Civic Leaders Gathering, March 2019

Research Experience

Doctoral Research Assistant, Houston Education Research Consortium (HERC), Kinder Institute for Urban Research

Rice University, Houston TX, 2016-Present

- HERC is a research practice partnership (RPP) between Rice University and eleven area school districts, including the Houston Independent School District (HISD) – the nation’s eighth largest school district.

Graduate Fellow, Religion and Public Life Program
Rice University, Houston, TX, 2016-Present

Research Assistant, Mexican Children of Immigrants Program Project Grant (PI: Nancy Landale, Penn State University): Project 2 on Obesity among Children of Mexican Immigrants (PI- Jennifer Van Hook, Penn State University), Spring 2017

- Assisted Jennifer Van Hook, Michelle Frisco & Molly Dondero with collection of qualitative data from Latina mothers

Research Associate, Center for Child and Community Development, Simmons School of Education and Human Development

Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX, 2012-2016

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition Grant (PI: Dr. Hector Rivera, Texas A&M): *Connecting Research, Pedagogy and Curriculum in School Settings: Developing K-12 Educational Leadership Teams*

Consortia Partners: Dallas Independent School District, Irving Independent School District, Mesquite Independent School District, Forney Independent School District and Region 10 Education Service Center.

Research Associate, Center for Child and Community Development, Simmons School of Education and Human Development

Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX, 2009-2010

Conference Presentations

“Rooted and Grounded in Faith: Latino Youth, Parents and Faith Leader Responses to Perceived Conflicts in Science Education,” Accepted Proposal, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, Baltimore, Maryland, 2022

“Time, Money and the Congregational (Dis)Advantage: Latino Perceived Barriers to Degrees in Science and Medicine and the Intervening Role of Congregations,” Accepted Panel Session, Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, California, 2022

“No Place Like Church?: Proximity, Religious Participation and Latino College Pathways,” Accepted Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, California, 2022

“How Congregational Participation Shapes the STEM Higher Education Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Poster, American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting (Virtual), 2022

“Latinos, Faith and Science Education: How Congregational Participation Shapes the Science Education Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, 2021

“Religion and Latino College Outcomes: Unexamined Dimensions of Latino Higher Education Attainment,” Poster Session, Conference of Ford Fellows 2021

“Latino Youth and Religious Institutions: Unexamined Contexts Shaping Latino College Outcomes,” Refereed Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, 2021

- “Inequalities in Postsecondary Attainment by English Learner Status: The Role of College-Level Course-Taking,” Society for the Study of Social Problems Annual Meeting, with Brian Holzman, (Co-author: Irina Chukhray), 2021
- “How Congregational Participation Shapes the College Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Refereed Roundtable, American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, 2021
- “Timing to Reclassification for English Learners in Texas: Exploring the Role of District Mobility,” American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, (Co-author: Elizabeth Cashiola), 2021
- “Race, Religion and Education Policy: Unexamined Dimensions of Support for National Educational Spending and Interest in Local School Issues,” Association for Education Finance and Policy Annual Conference, with Robert A. Thomson (Co-author: Elaine Howard Ecklund), 2021
- “How Religious Participation Shapes the College Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Sociology of Education Association Annual Conference, 2021
- “An Overlooked Predictor of Latino Higher Education Outcomes: Religious Affiliation,” Virtual Academic Exchange Session, Annual Conference of Ford Fellows, 2020
- “Comparing Confidence in Institutions Among Latino and White Catholics and Evangelicals,” Virtual Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting (Co-authors: Sharan Mehta, Esther Chan), 2020
- “A Comparative Analysis of College Advising at Ten School Districts in a Large Metropolitan Area,” American Education Research Association, (Co-author: Irina Chukhray), 2020
- “Producing ‘Colorblind’ Racial Frames in the Workplace: Bringing Religion to the Table.” Presidential Theme Session, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, with Elaine Howard Ecklund and Sharan Mehta, 2019
- “Race, Religion and Education Policy: Examining Differences in Attitudes Toward Educational Spending and Local School Issues.” Refereed Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, New York, New York (Co-authors: Robert Thomson, Elaine Howard Ecklund), 2019
- “Race, Religion and Public Policy: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Evangelicals and Catholics on Contested Public Policy Debates.” Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting, New York, New York, 2019
- “Inequalities in Educational Attainment by English Learner Status: A Case of Leveled Tracking.” American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada, with Brian Holzman (Co-author: Irina Chukhray), 2019
- “Race, Religion, and Attitudes Toward Teaching Creationism.” Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV, (Co-authors: Brandon Vaidyanathan, Elaine Howard Ecklund, Adriana Garcia), 2018

- “Inequalities in Educational Attainment by English Learner Status: A Case of Leveled Tracking.” Association for the Study of Higher Education Annual Conference, Tampa, FL, with Brian Holzman (Co-author: Irina Chukhray), 2018
- “Religious Affiliation and Confidence in Institutions: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Catholics and Protestants.” Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, (Co-authors: Sharan Mehta, Esther Chan), 2018
- “Racial Differences in Promotion, Publication, and Pay among US Physicists and Biologists.” Refereed Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, with Robert J. Thomson, 2018
- “Inequalities in Educational Attainment by English Learner Status.” Texas Higher Education Symposium, Houston, TX, with Brian Holzman, (Co-author: Irina Chukhray), 2018
- “The Interplay Between Teacher Professional Development and Community Development: Building Capacity in International Settings.” Hawaii International Conference on Education Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI, with Dr. Hector Rivera, Ninfa Tarango, Genesis Morales and Raul Magdaleno, 2015
- “The Latino Church and Education: Studying Educational Expectations Among Latino Youth Congregants.” Association for the Sociology of Religion 2014 Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, 2014
- “Studying the Academic Path of ELL Newcomer Students in the Schooling Process.” National Association for Bilingual Education Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, with Dr. Hector Rivera and Emma Cepeda, 2014
- “Linking Programs to Create Meaning: Enhancing the Academic Path for ELLs.” National Association for Bilingual Education Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX, with Coral Balcazar and Genesis Morales, 2012

Teaching Experience

- “SOC1 101: Introduction to Sociology,” Instructor of Record, Rice University, Summer 2022
- “Data, Ethics and Society,” Data Science 305, Teaching Assistant, Rice University, Spring 2019
- Research on Teaching and Learning, Course II, Center for Teaching Excellence, Rice University, Spring 2019
- Principles of Effective College Teaching, Course I, Center for Teaching Excellence, Rice University, Fall 2018
- “Social Statistics,” Sociology 382, Teaching Assistant, Rice University, Spring 2018
- “Latinos, Religion and Education,” Guest Lecturer, University of Georgia, Fall 2017
- “Latinos, Religion and Education,” Guest Lecturer, University of Georgia, Spring 2018

Department, University and Professional Service

Advisory Board Member, “Diversity in Science” Study, Rice University and West Virginia University, 2021-Present

Graduate Fellowships Coach, Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Rice University, 2021-2022

Elected Graduate Student Representative, American Sociological Association, Religion Section, 2019-2020

Graduate Student Representative, Sociology Graduate Committee, Rice University, 2018-2019

“Getting Help with Statistics in the Department of Sociology,” Departmental Professionalization, Co-Facilitator, January 2019

“Religion vs Science,” Book Release, Introduction of Authors, Rice University, Spring 2018

Relevant Professional Experience

Director, National Hispanic Education Summit
Faith and Education Coalition, 2013-2016

Director, Dallas Hispanic Youth Institute
Hispanic College Fund, Washington D.C., (Dallas Office), 2010-2011

Manager, Dallas Hispanic Youth Institute
Hispanic College Fund and Southern Methodist University, 2009-2010

Intern, Diversity and Community Engagement
Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University, 2007-2009

Professionalization Experience

Psychometrics and Scale Development Workshop, Statistical Training and Research Techniques at Rice University (STaRT@Rice), 2021

Longitudinal Data Analysis, Including Categorical Outcomes, ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research, University of Michigan, 2021

Introduction to Casual Inference, Certification of Completion, Department of Statistics and Data Sciences, University of Texas at Austin, 2019

Referee Experience

American Educational Research Journal, Sociology of Religion

Professional Affiliations

American Sociological Association
American Educational Research Association
Association for the Sociology of Religion
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
Sociology of Education Association

References

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