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## Including the Central American Narrative in Higher Education

Karla Ramirez

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Fig.1 drawing of someone looking at Central America through a lens (thecentamcollective)

## *Including the Central American Narrative in Higher Education*

Karla Ramirez  
Senior Capstone  
Communication Studies  
Research Paper  
Dr. Lee Ritscher  
School of Humanities and Communication  
Spring 2021

## Acknowledgements:

*This project is dedicated to my parents, Marcos Ramirez and Candelaria Sorto-Cruz, who came to this country fleeing the war in El Salvador. They have had first hand experience with their own history being erased due to natural disasters and wars in their home country. This inspired me while working on my project as I felt it was necessary to preserve our history. Thank you Mamá and Papá for always supporting me throughout my educational journey. To my Grandpa in heaven who was my biggest inspiration thank you for always cheering me on. Lastly, to my family and friends who have stuck by my side thank you for your endless support. I am proud to say that I am the second person in both sides of my family to graduate from a University in this country. I am proud to be a Central American first generation graduate!*

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## Senior Project Proposal

1. **Name and Concentration:** My name is Karla Ramirez. I am a Humanities and Communications major with an area of concentration in Communication Studies.
2. **Focus:** The issue I want to address within this research project is the lack of education related to Central American studies and the effects it has on Central Americans living within the United States. Why not include Central American studies within our curriculum? Why has our history been erased? I am passionate about this subject as I myself am Central American and there is a lot of history that I have uncovered about my background just by doing my own research since I was never taught any of this in school. I want to educate others on this topic and bring awareness to it as well.
3. **Alignment with Common Theme and HCOM:** The reason why this project would align with the theme of inquiry is because I will be researching Central American studies which is a subject that is not taught in the U.S. There is a lot of lost and forgotten history when it comes to Central America as a result of many civil wars the diaspora has faced. This course is about hidden histories and this would allow me to elaborate on the hidden stories of Central Americans.
4. **Purpose:** The purpose of my project is to bring awareness to the issue of Central American erasure, and the effects it has on Central Americans in the United States. I want to be able to educate folks on this topic. I feel that it is important for people to understand why many Central American folks have come to America, and that a lot of it is a result of US intervention in Central America.
5. **Capstone Title:** I am still working on a title, but I think I might stick with *Casamiento Dialogue: Including the Central American Narrative*.

**6/7. Working Summary: Provide a one-paragraph working summary of your project. Sources:** In order to elaborate on my project I will be using previous interviews I have conducted related to this topic. I will also be using scholarly peer-reviewed articles, websites, and possibly books/documentaries to help me with my research. I will bring in original oral histories from those who have been affected by this and my own personal experience to the paper.

8. **Next Steps:** I will be doing more research to bring in new information that I have not gathered in order to make my project even better.

9. **Timeline:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Project Proposal	February 8 (draft); February 15 (final)
Start intensive research and go over previous project related to this topic to see what material may assist this project	Week of February 22nd
Start looking for folks to interview	First week of March
Start finalizing	May 9
Oral presentation (5 points)	Capstone Festival (TBA)

## The Inclusion of Central American Studies in Higher Education

I was born in Los Angeles, California, to two Central American immigrants. My parents came to this country in the late 80s and early 90s fleeing from the U.S.-funded war in El Salvador. My parents adapted to the culture here in California while still maintaining a connection to their roots. Spanish was my first language growing up and they made sure to instill pride in me when it came to my ethnic background. I always knew I was Central American, but it was not until I was older that I realized there was a disparity when it came to our acknowledgement in higher education. I started wanting to learn more about my own history, but I did not have the access to it. Unfortunately, due to natural disasters and a civil war a lot of our history has been erased. It is important for us to include Central American studies in order to preserve our history.

To gain more knowledge on this topic, I read various articles, watched a film, and conducted two interviews with scholars who had researched Central American Studies. The scholars interviewed also highlighted the Central American experience by teaching folks about the importance of Central American Studies. One of the interviews was conducted via phone and lasted about an hour. The responses to the interview were written by hand. The other interview I conducted was via email, which provided receipts for the answers. All of these methods provided me with great examples to support my paper.

While doing my research I have been able to learn more about my own history, which has allowed me to feel connected to my roots. Most of the knowledge I have about Central America comes from asking my elders lots of questions and from my own independent research. This is a pressing issue that I noticed after talking to many of my Central American peers. Now that we are all older we have realized how underrepresented we are everywhere.

When it comes to the information known about Central America, the general public knows little to nothing about what goes on beyond Mexico.

The history of Central America runs deep. It is an isthmus that is often overlooked despite it connecting North and South America. This little strip of land may not mean much to others, but it is a beautiful melting pot full of rich culture. While conducting my research I came across the book *Dividing the Isthmus: Central American Transnational Histories, Literatures, and Culture* by Ana Patricia Rodríguez. This book helped me understand and learn more about what it is like to research on the topic of Central American Studies. There was a particular statement that the author made that stood out to me. Rodríguez stated, “Although pursuing Central American Studies in the United States can be a lonely endeavor, it is always a labor of dedication for those of us who pursue it” (Rodríguez, Acknowledgments page). When I read this statement it felt as if Rodríguez was talking to me.

There were many times where I was doing my research for my capstone where I wanted to give up and change the subject. Many times it felt like a lonely battle that I was fighting by myself. It felt like I was going in circles trying to find more information in order to provide a solid paper, but I am so happy that I was able to come across this book that goes more in depth about the topic. Rodríguez also talks about how she has been blessed to work with scholars of Central American Studies and how her life changed after taking two Central American studies courses. She also spoke at California State University, Northridge, which is the home of the first Central American Studies department in the United States. I found this particular part to be interesting because it shows just how small, yet connected people who study this topic are. I will actually be talking more in depth about CSUN’s Central American Studies department later in this paper as I continue with the history of this topic.

The Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s gained traction as specific activists became

involved, such as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. This sparked many folks' interest, and in 1968 it ended up inspiring a group of students who were attending San Francisco State University. The students involved were from the Black Student Union and the Third World Liberation Front which was a coalition of minority student groups. The students had a list of demands that included: access to higher education, the institution to hire more faculty of color, and a curriculum that would highlight the history of people of color. The students then proceeded with a strike which was the most prolonged protest in history. The protest lasted for five months, and eventually, the institution recognized the students' demands and implemented Ethnic Studies into the curriculum.

The first Ethnic Studies class was taught at San Francisco State University by Dr. James Hirabayashi on March 20, 1969. The film *Precious Knowledge* talks about the history behind Ethnic Studies and how it came into fruition. Ethnic Studies focuses on studying the difference of race, ethnicity, nation, but also sexuality, and gender. It continued to grow as people of color became more aware, and eventually it branched out into African-American Studies, Asian-American Studies, Raza Studies, Chicano Studies, Mexican-American Studies, and Native-American Studies. Ethnic Studies was a great introduction for others to learn about their culture and ethnic background. However, as the years have passed it has not expanded enough to include Central American Studies.

Evidence on a previous study facilitated at Stanford University on struggling freshmen in high school showed that students who took Ethnic Studies had a significant improvement in attendance. The students' attendance points went up 21 percent, their grade-point average increased, and students in these courses that covered discrimination, stereotypes, and social-justice movements earned 23 more credits toward graduation. "Taking ethnic studies not only improved the academic performance of students but also promoted their academic

engagement and discouraged dropping out”... (Anderson). I find this study to be important because it proves that when students of color learn more about their ethnic background they tend to be more engaged with the coursework and eager to learn as they are finally able to identify with the material.

A perfect example of the erasure of Central Americans in academia is portrayed throughout certain programs, and clubs that have been established at institutions. One of the organizations that has come under fire in recent years for this has been MEChA. The organization was established and founded by Mexican-American students in the 1960s. MEChA stands for *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (Spanish) or Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán (English). Their mission statement on their website is to: “encourage Latinos to enter and finish college, and to fight for Latino student rights and other progressive political causes.” People have now been trying to change the name to make it more inclusive, but despite their mission statement wanting to uplift Latinos, a previous member of MEChA had a different stance on the name change. The article *Mexican American Student Group MEChA Considers Name Change amid Controversy*, on NBC News talks about the exclusivity that MEChA portrays, and how Los Angeles-based activist and former MEChA member from the 80s, Revo Grafia felt about the situation. Grafia stated, “They (those who do not identify as Chicano, Mexican, or Mexican American) have a right to start their own group” (*The Associated Press*). Grafia said. “I wouldn’t go to a Black Lives Matter rally and demand they change it to ‘All Lives Matter’ because I’m Chicano.” This statement did not go well with folks and it sparked more controversy for the organization.

During the 1980s and 90s, thousands of Central Americans fled the political turmoil and violence in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador for safety and a better life in the United States. My parents and my family were part of those thousands. My mom grew up in Santa Rosa

de Lima, La Union, El Salvador and at the tender age of 14 was sent to Panama as a result of the war. My grandparents made this difficult decision because it was becoming unsafe for my mom during that time because the guerillas would take young girls and force them to marry the guerillas. My grandparents did not want that kind of life for her so she was sent to Panama where she was able to go to school and become the first in her family to graduate from high school. Eventually, my mom fled Panama when the US invaded it and she returned to El Salvador where she eventually made her way to the States. My dad was born in Honduras, but raised in San Juan Opico, La Libertad, El Salvador. He spent a lot of his childhood working and playing soccer. My grandparents came from very humble backgrounds, so my dad was unable to continue his education as a kid. My dad left El Salvador in the late 80s; little did he know that would be the last time he ever saw his father.

The United States interfered with many wars going on within Central America during this time. The article “Twelve Years a Terror: U.S. Impact in the 12-Year Civil War in El Salvador,” by Cara McKinney, delves into the impact that the war had on the Salvadoran people. Many folks of Central American descent do not talk about how the war has caused a lot of trauma for fellow Central Americans who grew up in that time period. My family is no exception. Additionally, the U.S. always fails to mention their part in the wars that occurred in Central America and how they funded these wars that caused so much damage to these countries. Learning about these important parts of Central American history can be very beneficial for folks, as they would have a better understanding of familial history and people outside of the Central American population would be able to resonate more with the fact that many Central Americans and their elders experienced trauma growing up.

After a lot of exclusion in academia, Central American Studies finally made its way into higher education when it was introduced at California State University, Northridge in the year

2000. This was the first university in the nation to include Central American studies as a program. CSU Northridge has one of the largest populations of Central American students in the country, with nearly 4,000 students either born in Central America or with Central American immigrant parents. Most of the students are of Salvadoran or Guatemalan descent. The university offers 4-5 year programs depending on if you are a standard or double-major student. They offer a variety of courses and since their start in 2000 they have since expanded. In 2015, CSU Northridge implemented Central American Studies as a department on campus and started offering it as a major and a minor. This again was the first department in the nation. The department's goal is to uplift Central Americans through education and promote a sense of community to allow Central Americans to see themselves through academia and society and to help understand the diversity of Central America.

In 2019, students from the University of California, Los Angeles, petitioned for a name change to the César E. Chávez Department of Chicana & Chicano Studies; this name change would include Central American Studies. This request led to some deliberation, and the opposing side argued that adding the name would be an erasure of the Chicano and Mexican-American experience, despite the fact that the exclusion erases the Central American Studies aspect of the department. Leisy Abrego, a professor at the UCLA department and a Salvadoran immigrant herself, advocated for the name change and stated, "If recognizing our work alongside the work of the Chicana community is erasure, what would you call having us continue to do work without recognition?" As a result of this, the Department approved the name change in November of 2019. The students advocated for change and were listened to. Within their request they highlighted that their next step is to implement both a major and minor for Central American studies at their institution. Their goal is to have a full-fledged department

within the next five years.

The article *Central American studies was the most important class I ever took*, by Daniel Alvarenga goes over how Central American studies impacted him. He states that this course was, “The single most important classroom experience I’ve ever had.” Alvarenga then goes on to explain that for many Central Americans the first time they ever see themselves represented in the media has been through a housekeeper in a show or in the negative light that news outlets sensationalize gang violence in these countries. Alvarenga observes that while taking this course he was able to realize how valuable his ethnic background and history was. When class sessions ended, his classmates followed him back to his dorm to pick his brain about his Central American experience. He explains that he finally felt the validation his white peers felt in other classes. Alvarenga mentions that it is time for the country to have a dialogue surrounding Central America. He adds that a lot of the issues currently going on stem from generations of U.S. intervention in these countries. Learning about history teaches us how older generations have dealt with their trauma, and how difficult it is for them to validate their experiences. It also allows Central American students to immerse themselves in their history, art, and culture. This encourages students to be more interested as they can relate to the material that they are being taught.

In 2019 I had the pleasure of interviewing Raul Moreno, a Central American studies professor at California State University, Channel Islands, on Central American erasure and the importance of including the Central American narrative in higher education. A little background on Moreno is that he was born in El Salvador and came to the United States in 1987. Moreno's journey to the U.S. began during the Civil War in El Salvador, where he was forced to leave his country and eventually settled in North Hollywood, California. Moreno received his Ph.D. in Political Science but felt like there was no place for him in that field. He was fortunate enough

to have support from faculty at CSU Channel Islands, who saw that it was essential to teach Central American studies at the collegiate level. My cousin took the first course ever offered at CSU Channel Islands, and after taking that course, it made her want to visit Central America and learn more about that side of her ethnic background. Again, this leads to my thesis that Central American studies should be implemented in higher education and is beneficial for the students who take them. Moreno believes that Central American erasure is critical to talk about because Central Americans have become an increasingly more significant part of the Latino population since the first waves of migrants that came to the U.S. in the late 80s. He also explained to me the importance of having Central American Studies in higher education.

Our interview began with Moreno highlighting that over 2 million Salvadorans are living in this country. He stated, "You see when you take the population of Salvadorans which is the highest of Central Americans living in the states and if you take them all together, it is over 4 million people in the states." They are a large and growing population, and it is crucial to recognize that they are a significant part of the U.S. The history of Central Americans and its importance is vital to understand where we are today. Much of the events in Central America during the period of civil conflicts continue to shape U.S. history today. The plan of fighting the counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare in Iraq was officially turned into the Salvadoran option. The U.S. military implemented a policy of fighting unconventional warfare and used techniques that were used during the Salvadoran civil war.

There are so many reasons as to why recognizing Central American erasure is essential. We are erasing people's narratives and erasing them from history. Moreno adds, "The erasure of Central Americans is very problematic. We are not a footnote to western history. The erasure speaks to a continued process of colonial erasure. Erasing this history erases the influence that

the U.S. has had on their right-wing conservative parties, and how a lot of the issues stem from U.S. intervention in Central America. These issues have resulted in gangs, and people fleeing their home countries.

U.S. intervention in Central America has been an ongoing issue for decades. It all began in 1904 when President Theodore Roosevelt implemented international police power in Latin America. Since then, the U.S. has intervened by funding military coups, withholding resources from the community, enforcing corrupt politicians, the zero-tolerance policy that deported many folks back to Central America, and more recently, the Central American Free Trade Agreement. The influence the U.S. has had on Central American dates back a century and has resulted in a lot of trauma. Supporting and funding military coups has caused civil wars in Central America like the Salvadoran Civil War that the Reagan administration funded. Withholding of resources has forced the Central American people into poverty. Enforcing corrupt politicians has also resulted in a lack of assistance and support for the people. The zero-tolerance immigration policy resulted in members of the Mara Salvatrucha and 18th Street gangs being deported, which has caused a lot of violence in Central America. The Bush administration initially enforced the Central American Free Trade Agreement because it would bring in more jobs for the people and better the economy. Unfortunately, it did just the opposite and hurt the economy and the small farmers and textile workers. These are just a few examples of how U.S. intervention has affected the Central American people and why they should be highlighted in our history as they have a lot to do with our past.

Professor Moreno taught me a lot within the hour that I spent speaking to him. I learned more from him about my history than I had before. He helped me research more on the war on drugs and how the U.S. used Central America's ideas for modern capitalism. He also inspired me to host an event on campus in March of 2020 (literally two days before the world turned

upside down) to bring awareness to Central American narratives. He is living proof that it can become a reality if you want to see a change and fight for it. His story on becoming a Central American studies professor was inspiring and motivated me to continue researching this topic during my time at California State University, Monterey Bay.

As I mentioned above, I was inspired after my interview with Professor Moreno to host an event on campus last spring. He was not the only person who motivated me, though; I was blessed to have the support of my mentors, Maria Lopez Cabrera and Jessica Sierra, throughout this process. The two of them, along with Professor Chrissy Hernandez, helped motivate me to follow through with my goal of hosting an event. I lacked motivation because I felt like people would not want to come to my event or understand my reasoning behind bringing awareness to the topic. I went along with my plans and hosted the event just before the campus shut down. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to do this because I could educate the students who went on this subject. Many of them expressed how they never knew about a lot of the information I provided to them. Two people who participated were of Central American descent, and they expressed how important it was to them that I hosted an event highlighting our narratives. Overall, it was a great learning experience for me, and it further proved my thesis once again on how inclusion is essential.

In 2019, I had the opportunity to interview the founder of the organization Centam Collective, Sussan Garcia, a 23-year-old alumna from New York University, Abu Dhabi, who double majored in Arab Crossroads Studies and Political Science. Garcia gave an insight into how she came to fruition with her organization. Garcia was born in Jamaica, Queens, New York, to immigrant parents from Guatemala. The lack of Central American representation is why Garcia decided to produce the CentAm Collective and believes Central American erasure is a crucial reason why the organization has grown. As she grew up, she became more

politically and socially conscious and tried to connect with the Latinx community, but found that many organizations and media outlets were Mexican-centric. Garcia said, "I realized quickly that the Central American organizations and outlets that did exist had to go out of their way to make space, which was a great first step, but I really wanted to mobilize our whole community due to the fact that I believe that due to Central American erasure, the real-life consequences manifest in lack of opportunities, community-building, resources, and ultimately success."

One of the first features the CentAm Collective ran on their social media was "The CentAm Erasure Series." That series did well on their social media and first launched with an accessible definition of Central American erasure and its examples. Garcia shares a submission of what that might look like every week. People describe how they have experienced the erasure and how it affects them. Garcia gets tons of submissions on how the CentAm Collective is bringing awareness to this issue has helped them. Garcia added, "I have received amazing messages detailing how for so long they have been ignored, invalidated, or just missing from the discourse, and this is the first time they can find a community, learn more about it, and see themselves in it."

She hopes that the CentAm Collective can fill in and serve the Central American community the way it deserves. Through their website and their Ambassador program, they have local representatives assisting the community on the ground. Garcia ended our interview with, "One of my other goals is to empower everyone in the community to recognize that they deserve to be served and take up space, to begin with, and can go on and take that energy in their local communities and day-to-day lives as they navigate being in spaces where they are most likely one of the few, if not only, Central Americans." I believe the CentAm Collective is doing a great job in helping us feel seen and heard. I also wanted to add that their organization

has grown immensely since I last spoke to Garcia. Their social media platform has over 23,000 followers and continues to educate folks on Central American issues.

Having the opportunity to interview a founder of an organization that I admire and follow was incredible. Garcia made me realize how important this topic is and how it should be discussed within higher education. Hearing the background of how her organization began was inspiring. She saw a lack of representation within our community and decided to do something about it. This issue is critical as many Central Americans do not feel seen or heard within public spaces or in general. Her theory is that if you feel like something is lacking and you want to be heard, then be the one to do something and start that change. We need representation, and I am grateful to have found like-minded people who felt that something needed to change, so they decided to be the ones to do something about it. We might be a small village now, but little by little, there will be change. Suppose people like Moreno, Garcia, and all of those who have paved the way for Central American representation in education continue their work. In that case, we will one day see this department grow.

The topic of including Central American studies in higher education dawned on me my first semester at California State University, Monterey Bay. Since then, I have had instances where this topic is relevant, and I continue to research it. It felt like I could never escape from the topic because of how relevant it was to my time at the institution. Working on this project has motivated me to continue researching this topic because this topic changed my life. It is incredible. It allowed me to have the courage to speak out more in classes about this issue. I was inspired to host an event and was supposed to host a workshop on this topic for the Undocu-Success Conference, but due to covid, that was cancelled. I was able to connect with peers and interview professionals on this matter. It allowed me to connect with my roots and have a dialogue about this with my parents. I am grateful to have been able to continue my

research, and I hope to educate folks on this issue.

This project taught me that representation regarding your ethnic background is significant and can help shape your identity. I learned more about Central America through the research, and it was nice to connect with people who feel the same way about this issue as I do. It was also great to learn about all the different organizations helping to raise awareness on this issue. This project challenged me more than I expected, but it was enriching. It taught me a lot about myself, and I reflected on these past two years at CSU Monterey Bay and how everything has come full circle for me. I proved to myself that if I want to speak about something that I am passionate about, I should not be afraid to speak out on the issue regardless of what others might think.

## Annotated Bibliography

Alvarenga, Daniel. "Perspective | Central American Studies Was the Most Important Class I Ever Took." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 13 Dec. 2019, [www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/12/12/what-i-learned-about-my-salvadoran-heritage-central-american-studies-class/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/12/12/what-i-learned-about-my-salvadoran-heritage-central-american-studies-class/).

The article above provides the first-hand experience of a student who took Central American Studies for the first time. He discusses the impact and importance that the courses had on his life. He also discusses how the courses can be beneficial for students of Central American descent. This research supported my paper because it proved how impactful Central American Studies could be for students.

Anderson, Melinda D. "The Academic Benefits of Ethnic Studies." *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 8 Mar. 2016, [www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/03/the-ongoing-battle-over-ethnic-studies/472422/](http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/03/the-ongoing-battle-over-ethnic-studies/472422/).

The article "The Academic Benefits of Ethnic Studies" discusses how students of color are significantly impacted when they take Ethnic Studies. The courses allow the students to learn more about their history and relate to the subject. This article was significant to my research because it shows the positive effects that Ethnic Studies has on students of color and how when they are taught history they can relate to, they are more inclined to do better.

Diaz, Daniel. "History of Ethnic Studies Timeline – Ethnic Studies K-12 – XChange." *UCLA Center X*, 6 Jan. 2020, [centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/xchange/ethnic-studies-k-12/historical-timeline-for-ethnic-studies/](http://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/xchange/ethnic-studies-k-12/historical-timeline-for-ethnic-studies/).

The UCLA X Change center's article provides a detailed timeline on the history of Ethnic Studies. The article talks about how the Civil Rights movement influenced students from San Francisco State University to protest and demand the institution to highlight students of color. It also explains how the protest was the longest in history and resulted in the institution applying Ethnic Studies to their curriculum. This article was necessary for my research as it explains how Ethnic Studies came into and how that has influenced prospective classes that highlight people of color.

Garcia, Sussan. Email interview. 17 November 2019.

Sussan Garcia, a former student at New York University Abu Dhabi, was interviewed in 2019 as part of research on this subject. She is the founder of the organization CentAm Collective which educates people on Central America via social media and monthly newsletters. Sussan advocates for Central Americans and provides excellent information on why we should celebrate Central Americans. She was a great asset to this project as she offered hands-on experience to support my topic.

Jeansonne, Brent. "The Pros and Cons of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) on the Horticulture Sectors in the U.S. and Central American Countries." *University of Florida IFAS Extension*, 2 Feb. 2012.

This article discussed the pros and cons of the Central American Free Trade Agreement. It allows folks to have a better understanding of what the agreement entails. It helped my research as it explained how the CAFTA agreement had been a significant factor in the declining economy in Central America. The deal was supposed to help the people, but it did the opposite. This article further supports my theory that U.S. involvement has affected the Central American people in upsetting ways.

McKinney, Cara E. (2015) "Twelve Years a Terror: U.S. Impact in the 12-Year Civil War in El Salvador," International ResearchScape Journal: Vol. 2 , Article 5. Available at: <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/irj/vol2/iss1/5>

The scholarly article “Twelve Years a Terror: U.S. Impact in the 12-Year Civil War in El Salvador” dives deep into the impact that the Salvadoran Civil War had on its people. It allows us to learn more about why the Salvadoran people act a certain way and how the civil war changed their lives dramatically. The article was crucial in supporting my research on how U.S. intervention affected people in Central America.

Morgan, S. (2015, December 18). CSUN Establishes Nation's First Department of Central American Studies. Retrieved from <https://csunshinetoday.csun.edu/university-news/csun-establishes-nations-first-department-of-central-american-studies/>.

The article "CSUN Establishes Nation's First Department of Central American Studies" touched upon the history of California State University Northridge's Central American Studies Program. It provides us with some background information on their students of Central American descent and how they advocated for the institution to implement a Central American

Studies program. This article helps us understand the background of the program and how CSU Northridge has paved the way for Central American students.

Moreno Campos, Raul. Phone interview. 26 November 2019.

Professor Moreno was interviewed via phone in 2019 as part of previous research. He is a Salvadoran immigrant and the first Central American Studies professor at California State University, Channel Islands. Professor Moreno was able to educate me more on the history of Central American Studies and how U.S. intervention has affected the people of Central America. He provided me with many examples and insight into the program. He also inspired me to continue researching the topic and host an event on campus highlighting Central American students.

Press, The Associated. "Mexican American Student Group MEChA Considers Name Change amid Controversy." *NBCNews.com*, NBCUniversal News Group, 3 Apr. 2019, [www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/mexican-american-student-group-mecha-considers-name-change-amid-controversy-n990676](http://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/mexican-american-student-group-mecha-considers-name-change-amid-controversy-n990676).

The above article discusses the history of the Mexican American student group MeCha and the controversy it was most recently regarding its name. The article provides us with more detailed information on why the group was under fire and former members' thoughts about the situation. This specific citation allowed me to use this as an example of how some groups are meant to highlight the Latinx experience but sometimes exclude certain groups. It also supported my paper as I used one of the former members' thoughts on the issue to prove the group's exclusivity further.

Rodriguez, Ana Patricia. *Dividing the Isthmus Central American Transnational Histories, Literatures, and Cultures*. University of Texas Press, 2009.

The introduction to the book *Dividing the Isthmus: Central American Transnational Histories, Literatures, and Cultures* discuss the importance of researching this topic, but also the difficulties that come with it. This introduction supported me with my research as it helped me understand that although this research is complex and can be lonely, it is very much needed and rewarding.

Simón, Y. (2019, November 14). UCLA's Chicana & Chicano Studies Department Might Add "Central American" to Name. Retrieved from <https://remezcla.com/culture/ucla-chicana-chicano-studies-department-central-american-name-change/>.

The article above discusses how students and some faculty at the University of California Los Angeles advocated for a name change to their Chicano Studies Department. The students wanted it to include Central American Studies because the courses for Central American Studies fell under that department yet were not being highlighted.

Tseng-Putterman, Mark. "A Century of U.S. Intervention Created the Immigration Crisis." *Medium*, Medium, 28 June 2018, [medium.com/s/story/timeline-us-intervention-central-america-a9bea9ebc148](https://medium.com/s/story/timeline-us-intervention-central-america-a9bea9ebc148).

The article "A Century of U.S. Intervention Created the Immigrant Crisis" discusses the United States' involvement in Central America. It provides history on how U.S. intervention has been an issue in Latin America since the early 1900s and how it has poorly affected specific

communities. The article talks about how the Central American people have been affected by this and the results of this impact. This helped with my research as I touch upon how intervention is never discussed in our history despite its significant part in other countries' history.