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Chicana Feminist/Muxerista Healing Justice: Pedagogical Possibilities of Transformation in the Classroom and Beyond

Nadia Zepeda, PhD

California State University, Fullerton

**Chicana Feminist/Muxerista Healing Justice:
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Nadia Zepeda, PhD

California State University, Fullerton

Abstract

This article explores integrating a Chicana feminist/Muxerista healing justice framework into the classroom, highlighting its transformative potential for both students and educators. Grounded in the intersections of social justice, ancestral knowledge, and collective care, this pedagogical approach emphasizes students' holistic well-being, considering their bodies, minds, spirits, and multiple identities. The article demonstrates how the classroom can serve as a space for liberation, community building, and critical reflection. By engaging with topics such as resting as resistance, disability justice, pleasure activism, and community accountability, students explored the possibilities of healing justice within their own lives and communities. Through creative assignments, oral histories, and interactive practices like altar-making and ancestral reconnections, students applied theoretical knowledge to envision meaningful social change. Honoring the lineage of Chicana feminist and Muxerista activists, this framework bridges community activism with academic learning, creating a model for transformative education. The article concludes by emphasizing the necessity of courses like this in Chicanx Studies to imagine care, healing, and justice as central components of social movements, while also inspiring a legacy of empowerment, resilience, and hope.

Keywords: Healing Justice, Ancestral Knowledge, Chicana feminist, Muxerista Healing

“The classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy.” –bell hooks in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice for Freedom*

“Healing justice is a practice that asks people to heal each other and themselves, change the way they relate to each other, and organize themselves, and continually interrogate their tactics and interventions.” –Loretta Pyles in *Healing Justice: Holistic Self Care for Change Makers*

As an Ethnic Studies educator, my role in the classroom is to create a space where students feel seen, welcomed, and empowered to transform. As an activist-scholar, I strive to bridge community dialogues and to provide students with opportunities to envision transformative change for themselves and their communities. My work involves documenting transformative justice movements and integrating the insights gained from these experiences into my teaching practice. Conversations with activists and community elders have profoundly shaped my approach to social justice, informing my worldview. I begin with bell hooks’ (1994) powerful assertion that the classroom is “the most radical space of possibility in the academy” (p. 12). As educators, we have the unique potential to transform students, equipping them with tools to reshape their understanding of the world and themselves.

In Fall 2024, supported by the Latinx Lab for Storytelling and Social Justice, sponsored by the Mellon Grant, I launched a course on Healing Justice. This initiative encouraged faculty to transcend traditional social science models in Chicana Studies and to embrace a more intersectional humanities perspective. My participatory research and social justice activism have focused on articulating a healing justice politic, particularly through my collaboration with Mujeres de Maiz (MdM), a Chicana/Latina and Indigenous women’s activist and wellness collective founded in 1997 in East LA (Gonzalez et al., 2024). Documenting this organization and its lineage in the context of healing justice led me to explore this concept further (Zepeda, 2021). I was excited to apply the lessons I had learned in the classroom.

In *Healing Justice Lineages*, authors Page & Woodland (2023) define healing justice as “an incantation, a response to new patterns of movement and resistance; a call-and-response to our ancestors who survived colonization, slavery, and attempted genocide, healed, and transmitted a radical legacy for collective care and safety” (p.1). This framework offers a holistic perspective on transformative justice, addressing intersectional experiences while considering the body, mind, and spirit. Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2016) notes that “healing justice as a

movement and a term was created by queer and trans people of color, particularly Black and brown femmes, centering working-class, poor, disabled, and Southern/rural healers.” It is essential to note that healing justice is an intersectional framework developed by activists who envision and imagine alternative paths to justice.

I am excited to incorporate healing justice not only as a course topic but as a transformative lens through which to view the world. This article highlights the development of a healing justice framework and my Chicana feminist/Muxerista¹ healing justice politic, both within and beyond academia. My reflections demonstrate the transformative impact of this course on myself, the students, and the classroom environment. I illustrate how a Chicana feminist/Muxerista approach to healing justice can foster spaces of possibility and transformation, challenging heteropatriarchal structures and advancing healing and decolonization.

Positionality

As a first-generation queer Chicana feminist activist scholar, I found guidance and support from Chicana feminists and Muxeristas, which helped me navigate and survive the neoliberal heteropatriarchal university. This support enabled me to envision diverse possibilities for myself within academia. During my undergraduate years, I recognized the importance of advocating for intersectional perspectives, a journey that began in my early Chicana Studies classes in the early 2000s. At that time, I noticed a significant lack of representation for queer voices and women's perspectives in the curriculum, which mirrored the sexism and homophobia I encountered in organizing spaces.

In response, my friends and I founded the Chicana feminist collective, *Conciencia Femenil* (ConFem), to highlight the longstanding contributions of Chicana feminists in activism and history on our campus while addressing pressing issues of the time. ConFem organized two successful Chicana feminism conferences at Cal State in 2010 and 2011, which, unfortunately, attracted homophobic and misogynistic backlash reminiscent of the attacks faced by Chicana

¹ I use both Chicana feminist and Muxerista to highlight the important contributions Chicanas have made to feminist-of-color thought. I use Chicana feminisms to highlight early work, specifically from the late sixties and early seventies, to disrupt patriarchy in organizing spaces and scholarship. I also honor the work of Muxerista scholars, like Revilla (2022), specifically in education, who center the vision of social change while acknowledging how identity evolves and make room for all Joteria and feminist-of-color scholars and organizers.

feminists in the late sixties and early seventies. These incidents revealed systemic issues rather than isolated events (Rojas et al., 2014). Instead of ignoring the backlash, we sought to hold our departments and the university accountable for failing to create a safe environment for queer/trans individuals and women of color. We aimed to establish accountability systems within the university and national Chicana Studies organizations, such as the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) and Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS). Our efforts contributed to a special issue on Institutional Violence in *Chicana/Latina Studies*, housed under MALCS (Castañeda et al., 2014).

Although my early activism was vital and fulfilling, the urgency of the work led to burnout, as I lacked strategies for self-care. The university and my peers inflicted wounds, leaving me with *susto* from the multiple traumas I experienced. When I entered graduate school, I sought healing practices to reconnect with my spirit and recover from the academic and organizing-related wounds. This journey led me to reconnect with ancestral practices and explore sustainable organizing models. Collaborating with MdM demonstrated that we could organize while providing wellness support for both the community and ourselves (Gonzalez et al., 2024). Through my work with MdM, I aimed to trace the broader genealogy of healing and wellness in Chicana Feminist activism. The intersection of Chicana Feminist and healing justice offered a lens to understand this crucial contribution, which I termed Chicana/x Feminist Healing Justice (Zepeda, 2021).

By incorporating Muxerista into this work, I highlight the diverse ways both Chicanas feminists and Muxeristas engage in intersectional efforts to challenge heteropatriarchy within academia and beyond. In this piece, I draw on Chicana feminist and Muxerista insights to illustrate my use of healing justice in the classroom. My focus demonstrates how healing justice, both as a topic and practice, can transform the classroom into a liberatory space for all participants.

Chicana Feminist/Muxerista Epistemologies

When articulating Chicana feminist/Muxerista epistemology, it is crucial to acknowledge the foundational work of early Chicana and women of color feminists, who laid the groundwork for understanding intersectional politics (Garcia 1997; Nieto Gomez 1997; Combahee River Collective, 1986). These early feminist of color activists pioneered frameworks that contemporary women of color feminists can honor by advancing intersectional thinking.

This Bridge Called My Back, edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (1983), envisioned creating a space for women of color. The anthology brought women of color together to create a community through their intersectional identities. The standard analysis they shared was “difference” rather than the “sameness” that they saw in the nationalist movements and women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). The collection created an affirming space committed to the voices of women of color and the articulation of their feminisms. The use of the word 'radical' is intentional, highlighting the transformative power of the writing by women of color. The book commits to highlighting and elevating differences and diversity by honoring the voices of the women of color writers.

The work of women of color feminists transformed the discipline of education. Their interventions created space for studying, thinking, and transforming research and the classroom. In *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks (1994) emphasizes the need to view the student as the “whole” human, encompassing body, mind, and spirit (p. 14). hooks notes that knowledge does not just come from books but also from lived experiences. As educators, we battle “educational structures [that] seemed to denigrate notions of wholeness and uphold the idea of a body/mind split, one that promotes and supports compartmentalization” (p. 18). Ethnic Studies scholars strive to create transformative spaces for students, fostering environments where they can bring their whole selves, allowing for diverse perspectives, and emphasizing overall well-being. It involves understanding students' diverse experiences and allowing their full selves to enter the classroom. This means creating space for sharing ideas and experiences, recognizing the pressure they often face as students, and providing opportunities for flexibility and rest. I have a policy that allows students to use two wellness days, encouraging them to prioritize self-care throughout the semester. This way, they don't need to wait until they feel sick or overwhelmed to take a day off. Since many are first-generation students, I know their responsibilities extend beyond my course. Offering them flexibility to take a rest day during the semester supports their well-being inside and outside the classroom. Creating space for all the experiences they bring fosters a healing environment for everyone. I also emphasize the importance of rest, dedicating time to understanding and viewing rest as a form of resistance.

Chicana feminist and Muxerista scholars' contributions to the field of education have shifted many conversations. Chicana feminist education scholar, Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998), disrupts traditional paradigms by elevating Chicana feminist epistemology. She grounds

Chicana experiential knowledge as an innovative way to approach research that decenters patriarchy and whiteness. She notes, “a Chicana feminist epistemology maintains connection to Indigenous roots by embracing dualities that are necessary and complementary qualities and by challenging dichotomies that offer opposition without reconciliation” (p. 560). This approach challenges the mind/body dichotomy often perpetuated in the classroom. By elevating Indigenous and ancestral knowledge, Delgado Bernal offers a framing that allows for ambiguity and a decolonial process, creating space for possibilities and diverse voices.

Muxerista scholars, such as Anita Revilla, have produced inclusive literature on activism and pedagogy. Revilla (2022) defines Muxerista as “a person whose identity is rooted in a Chicana/Latina[x] feminist vision of social change committed to ending all forms of oppression... a Muxerista is simultaneously a Chicana/Latina[x], a feminist and activist—never just one or the other” (p. 193). Revilla views Muxerista identity as a living, ever-evolving force that makes room for everyone. Her integration of Jotería Studies, a newer subfield in Chicana studies that highlights queer/feminist epistemologies, within Muxerista definitions creates space for disruption against oppression, the celebration of queer love and joy, community love, and social change, among other aspects of Jotería Identity and Consciousness (Revilla & Santillana, 2014).

Chicana feminists and Muxeristas honor that work that has come before them and value the experiential knowledge that has laid the groundwork for this epistemology. In this vein, Chicana lesbian writer and thinker Cherrie Moraga (1983) offers the concept of “theory in the flesh” to understand the roles of knowledge producers. She writes, “A theory in the flesh means one where the physical realities of our lives—our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longing—all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity” (p. 23). Theory in the flesh uses the body as a site of knowledge that disrupts hegemonic epistemologies. By centering the experiences of Chicana feminists and Muxeristas, I aim to contribute to a body of knowledge that interrogates and expands our understanding of Chicana feminists and Muxerista pedagogy and organizing. I rely on the work of feminists of color who value everyday experiences and practices to disrupt hegemonic knowledge production. This also enables students to view their experiences as valuable contributions in the classroom, positioning them as creators of knowledge. This expansion of understanding moves away from

heteropatriarchal white supremacist narratives that harm and further alienate our communities and instead fosters moments of possibility by elevating students' experiences.

In connecting healing justice work with contemporary Chicana feminist and Muxerista healing justice, I draw on Gloria Anzaldúa's (2015) exploration of the intersections of healing, spirituality, and social justice. Anzaldúa elaborates on spiritual activism, defined as "spirituality for social change, spirituality that recognizes the many differences among us, yet insists on our commonalities and uses these commonalities as catalysts for transformation" (p. 246). She describes activism as "engaging in healing work. It means putting your hands in the dough and not merely thinking or talking about making tortillas. It means creating space and times for healing to happen, *espacios y tiempos* [spaces and times] to nourish the soul" (p. 91). Anzaldúa's writings remind us that visions of transformation in activism cannot occur without centering healing and doing the necessary work for it to take place. Incorporating healing justice in the classroom ensures that students who have felt traumatized or neglected by academia feel supported and empowered to bring their whole selves—their bodies, minds, spirits, and multiple identities—to the educational experience.

Through exploring healing justice and the contributions of Chicana feminists and Muxerista activists to healing, community care, intersectionality, and social justice activism, this article proposes a Chicana Feminist/Muxerista framework for healing justice. I assert that Chicana feminist/Muxerista healing justice, as elaborated in my other work, encompasses intersectional wholeness, community care, and healing from historical trauma (Zepeda, 2021). Healing justice is not a new phenomenon in Chicana feminist and Muxerista organizing; instead, there are numerous examples of how Chicanas and Muxeristas have merged community wellness, healing, and social justice in unique ways tailored to specific needs. Chicana feminist and Muxerista interventions aim to foster whole and healthy communities. Through lived experiences, Chicana feminists and Muxeristas vigorously decenter heteropatriarchy in social movements and classroom spaces, utilizing difference to build healing justice spaces. My work examines the impact of Chicana feminists and Muxeristas on contemporary conceptions and practices of holistic wellness and healing. Recognizing this legacy ensures that Chicanx activism continues to address community needs and intersectional experiences.

Healing Justice as a Transformative Tool for Social Justice

When envisioning community change, activists often turn to transformative justice frameworks for inspiration and guidance. Page & Woodland (2023) define transformative justice (TJ) as

an abolitionist framework that seeks to address harm, violence, and abuse without relying on interventions based on carceral strategies—punishment, retaliation, policing, surveillance, and prisons. TJ is survivor-centered and community-led and considers the context and conditions that lead to harm and violence as a result of structural oppression and generational trauma. The overall goal of TJ is to address the root causes of violence and to create the conditions for accountability, healing, and safety for victims/survivors as well as those who perpetrate harm (p.144).

To address community harm without relying on the carceral state, transformative justice activists explore strategies that extend beyond conventional understandings of violence, like the prison industrial complex, and instead propose an approach centered on community care and support. For example, a survivor-centered community accountability model that brings the community together to consider what holding someone accountable for harm can look like beyond state interventions. (Kim et al., 2011). This approach envisions practices that uproot violence and repair the harm caused, imagining new methods that rely on the community rather than the state.

In the 2010 U.S. Social Forum in Detroit, MI, artists and activists from across the nation gathered to discuss the importance of centering holistic healing in social justice movements. Participants envisioned a framework that disrupts generational trauma and violence, creating a practice that incorporates “healing inside liberation” (Page, 2010). Scholar Loretta Pyles (2018) defines healing justice as

a practice of attention and connection, a way of healing a sense of fracturedness
Alternatively, disconnection may be a result of trauma, oppressive socio-cultural narratives and practices, or the myriad ways in which humans may lose touch with each other and themselves. It is a practice that asks social practitioners of all kinds to cultivate the conditions that might allow them to feel more whole and connected to themselves, the world around them, and other human beings (xix).

Healing justice empowers us to envision a world centered on wellness that takes into account multiple intersectional identities. As a transformative justice movement, healing justice visualizes a world free from harm, prioritizing wellness and healing within communities of color. Healing justice provides a framework for envisioning social justice activism that addresses the conditions that allow communities to feel safe, live well, and thrive.

While this genealogy of healing justice is part of a larger tradition among people of color, it offers possibilities for transformation by centering community care and healing from historical trauma. This framework enables imagining movements that prioritize living well, pleasure, and healing from trauma. My intention in this piece is to bring Chicana feminists/Muxeristas into conversation with the concept of healing justice. Healing justice is crucial for Chicana studies because it fosters transformative social change across social differences, centers community wellness within social movements, and allows people to live dignified lives. It allows us to use this lens to center historically marginalized communities through an intersectional perspective. Overall, the lesson learned from healing justice enables us to envision transformation in our community by considering the multiple experiences.

The groundwork laid by women of color feminists provides alternative models for social change, crucial for envisioning a world without violence. They teach us that social justice work must rely on the community's understanding of the circumstances causing problems. As I address contemporary issues of healing justice in Chicana feminist /Muxerista organizing, it is essential to incorporate spiritual activism into discussions of social justice. Thus, I include Chicana organizing within the scope of healing justice to honor the lineage of community wellness and activism in the Chicana community. A Chicana feminist/Muxerista positionality enables an intersectional lens to understand community struggles and needs. I refer to Indigenous women and women of color to better articulate a politics of healing, utilizing their conceptualizations of healing and transformation to uncover necessary work and connect to Chicana feminist/Muxerista healing justice organizing. Through their work, I situate contemporary transformative justice forms that imagine possibilities for holistic community justice.

I employ a working definition of healing justice to develop a Chicana/Muxerista framework for healing justice. The definition encapsulates the lineage of early Chicana feminists and Muxeristas who have worked to create a community of care within their community, as

well as the efforts to center new visions of transformation, social justice activism, intersectionality, holistic wholeness, and healing from trauma through reconnecting with their ancestors. I highlight and elevate the idea that many Chicana feminists and Muxeristas have laid the groundwork for future generations to adopt a holistic and intersectional approach to social justice activism. As a scholar-activist, I must amplify the holistic activist work of contemporary Chicanas, while also honoring the genealogy of Chicana feminist/Muxerista activists, providing key insights, practices, and knowledge to current movements and activists.

Chicana Feminist/Muxerista Healing Justice in the Classroom

Part of our role as educators is to give students opportunities to explore new ideas and imagine a world without harm and oppression—a world that includes all communities, especially those historically marginalized. The classroom acts as a space for meaningful social change, and as educators, our job is to guide and support students to thrive in these environments. My social justice activism and intersectional identities deeply inform my approach to teaching.

During the fall 2024 semester, I created a classroom space where students could critically examine what transformative justice might look like in their own lives, using healing justice as the central framework. The course explored topics such as early feminist practices by women of color, resting as resistance, pleasure activism, disability justice, community accountability, reconnecting with ancestral practices, and activism. Healing justice, as envisioned by queer and trans people of color, draws on their intersecting identities to generate and share knowledge. Acknowledging that women of color feminists laid the foundation for this work, it was essential for students to engage with foundational texts and ideas.

Part of my teaching on Chicana feminist and Muxerista Healing Justice draws from interviews with activist elders. I had the privilege of interviewing Gloria Arellanes, a Chicana and Tongva elder who was deeply involved with the Brown Berets during the Chicano Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s (Espinoza, 2001). Sharing her story with my students demonstrated that healing justice has long been an integral part of our communities. When the state failed to provide resources, communities came together to meet their own needs. For example, Woodland (2023) highlights the Black Panthers' Free Breakfast Program, which fed children nationwide in 1969 (p. 38), and the Brown Berets' Barrio Free Clinic in East LA, led by Gloria Arellanes to provide critical medical resources to a historically marginalized

community afraid to seek care at County hospitals (Espinoza, 2001). These examples illustrate “what is possible when revolutionary care is at the center of our liberation work” (Woodland, 2023, p.39). Sharing these stories showed students the lasting legacy of community care and how activism rooted in healing can lead to real change. Gloria Arellanes also inspires students by embodying the rich history of the Chicano Movement while reconnecting with her Tongva ancestry, encouraging others to honor their own ancestral roots (Zepeda, 2021).

Rest became a central focus of our discussions, especially for first-generation students who often view rest as a luxury they cannot afford. Tricia Hersey’s (2022) *Rest as Resistance* became a pivotal text, encouraging students to see rest as a necessary act of resistance rather than an unattainable privilege. I relate to this because, as a first-generation college student and a child of immigrants, rest was not something my family practiced; my parents instilled a strong work ethic that often left me exhausted and burnt out. Being able to talk to students about the need for rest as a right rather than a reward reframed the narrative for all of us. For their final projects, some students created collages emphasizing the importance of rest within their families. They reflected on the sacrifices their parents made to ensure their survival, while also exploring ways to reclaim and document rest and joy in their daily lives.

By focusing on pleasure activism and disability justice, we explored how our bodies exist and move within different spaces. Pleasure activism encouraged students to consider how joy, pleasure, and fulfillment can play vital roles in social justice work (brown, 2019). brown talks about finding joy in activism and the need to “make the revolution irresistible” (p. 24). Therefore, the work I did with students involved recognizing joy in activism and embracing an identity as pleasure activists. At the same time, disability justice offered a framework to promote inclusivity and equity, emphasizing the importance of creating spaces where no one is left behind (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018). This involves demonstrating alternative ways of caring for the community and imagining what that can look like when different abilities make navigating the world more challenging, and how, in building community, we can support each other.

We also engaged in discussions on social justice activism by imagining new models of accountability and exploring the use of art as a tool for activism. Using the community accountability framework developed by INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, students learned how communities can come together to center the survivor and hold individuals accountable for harm (Kim et al., 2011). Additionally, studying *Mujeres de Maiz* allowed

students to see the power of reconnecting with ancestors and of integrating art into activism. Over its nearly 30-year history, this organization has exemplified a contemporary model of women of color feminisms (Gonzalez et al., 2024). These lessons helped students reimagine the transformative possibilities of healing justice and how it can empower their communities.

The course also included engaging with ancestral knowledge and healing from trauma. For Día de los Muertos, we built an altar to connect with ancestors and loved ones. Students brought photos of family members or objects that symbolized their inner child (Zepeda, 2019). This emotional exercise created a supportive and meaningful environment where students shared their stories and reflected on their connections to their ancestors. We also discussed family practices, such as using herbal remedies like garlic and honey for congestion, and using salt for spiritual protection. Many students took these discussions home and returned to the class with additional knowledge from their families. Before finals week, I brought herbs like lavender, lemon balm, and skullcap to class for students to explore, touch, smell, and take home to help manage stress.

I intentionally designed assignments to foster critical self-reflection and engagement. Journaling and pair-sharing helped students apply course concepts to their own lives while also allowing private introspection about new topics. A key assignment involved conducting oral histories, in which students interviewed activists or elders in their communities to explore storytelling as a means of empowerment and liberation. This assignment gave students valuable skills for connecting with their own family histories and for developing tools for future research or creative work. For their final project, students created artistic representations of their visions of healing justice, including collages, short films, poems, and other creative expressions. These projects allowed students to articulate and share their personal healing justice frameworks.

Throughout the course, I continually reflected on how educators can create transformative learning environments that consider the whole student. Many students juggle responsibilities, such as caring for family members or working full-time jobs, which can affect their ability to engage in class. To accommodate these challenges, I approached my teaching with compassion and flexibility. For example, I reached out to students who missed class to offer support. While some did not respond, others appreciated the opportunity to reconnect, overcoming feelings of shame caused by family emergencies or mental health struggles.

Additionally, I implemented wellness days, where students could take time for themselves simply by notifying me, without needing to provide an explanation.

This course was a transformative experience because students engaged with healing justice concepts and applied them meaningfully. By drawing on the diverse knowledge in their homes and cultural spaces, we created an environment that supported collective learning, growth, and healing. We concluded the semester with an art gallery that demonstrated how the course impacted students and expressed their visions of healing justice. Overall, the course served as a powerful reminder of how centering healing and social justice in the classroom can empower students and contribute to broader social transformation.

The Possibilities of Chicana feminist/Muxerista Healing Justice

Integrating a Chicana feminist/Muxerista healing justice framework into the classroom is a transformative practice that profoundly impacts both students and educators. By emphasizing intersectional wholeness, this approach considers students' bodies, minds, and spirits alongside the multiple identities they bring, creating a humanizing and empowering educational experience. By valuing students as creators of knowledge and acknowledging their expertise, the classroom becomes a space for healing and transformation. This type of learning challenges the violence perpetuated by a white supremacist, heteropatriarchal university system and seeks to undo the trauma it creates. Honoring the activists, elders, and community members who have paved the way reminds us that we are part of a long legacy of collective care and justice, showing us that we need not reinvent the wheel but instead continue its forward motion.

Creating an environment that supports exploration, critical reflection, and applied intersectional frameworks enables students to envision and enact meaningful change in their lives and communities. The course on healing justice provided students not only with theoretical tools but also with opportunities to apply these ideas through creative projects and community engagement. This approach bridges academic knowledge and real-world activism, grounding it in the rich traditions of Chicana feminist and Muxerista practices. Centering wellness, ancestral knowledge, and social justice fosters a classroom that transforms both individuals and collectives. By honoring diverse perspectives and lived experiences, the learning process becomes a catalyst for personal and communal growth.

Courses like this are essential in Chicanx Studies because they allow students to imagine new possibilities for care, healing, and activism within institutions and social movements. Our

discipline was founded on the dreams and visions of young student activists in the late sixties and early seventies, and courses like this honor that legacy. This work is critical for the continued evolution of the discipline, helping students explore what meaningful transformation looks like within and beyond the university. However, one course alone cannot accomplish this; it must be part of an ongoing series of conversations. In future iterations of this class, I plan to offer workshops or *pláticas* to deepen students' understanding of the work and extend the dialogue beyond the semester.

As we continue to integrate and expand healing justice within academic spaces, we must consistently honor the contributions of those who laid the foundation for this work. By merging the lessons learned from community activism with classroom practices, we can create educational environments that do more than inform—they can heal, inspire, and empower. This commitment to transformative education prepares future generations to navigate the complexities of identity, community, and social change while building a lasting legacy of empowerment, resilience, and hope.

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