

# Valeria J. Alonso Blanco

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## EDUCATION

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**University of California, Santa Cruz**

**Ph.D.** in Psychology

**M.S** in Psychology

Expected 2026

**University of California, Santa Cruz**

**B.A.** in Psychology – Highest Honors

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Belonging, servingness, and education equity; Experiences of community college students at HSIs;  
Cultural values and family assets among minoritized students; researcher-practitioner interventions.

## GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

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First Generation Graduate Group Research and Travel Award (\$1,500)	2025
Graduate Student Grant - Dolores Huerta Research Center for the Americas (\$1,000)	2025
California Community College Internship Program Fellow (\$7,500)	2024
UC President's Pre-Professoriate Fellowship (\$47,000 + tuition & fees)	2024
UC President's Experimental Learning Fellowship (\$7,416)	2023 - 2025
Dean's Travel Grant (\$425)	2022 - 2023
Career Development Fund (\$2,000)	2023
Department of Psychology Travel Grants (\$2,200)	2022 - 2024
Graduate Student Summer Research Grant (\$2,000)	2022
Office of Research Seed Funding for Early-Stage Initiatives Grant – Co-PI (\$40,000)	2022
Institute for Social Transformation Sprout Grant – Co-PI (\$9,000)	2022
Small-Scale Events Advancing SPSSI (SEAS) Grant (\$1,000)	2021
Graduate Student Summer Research Grant (\$4,000)	2021
Research Center for the Americans Graduate Student Grant (\$950)	2020
Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE) Scholarship (\$1,000)	2020
Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship - Alternate (\$81,000 + tuition & fees)	2020
Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship (\$99,000 + tuition & fees)	2019
Harvard Diversity Recruitment Program (DRP) Travel Fellowship	2018
Outstanding Teaching Senior Award, Department of Psychology	2018
UC President's Award for Outstanding Leadership	2018
Department of Psychology Research Funding Award	2018
Indiana University GU2IU Spring Recruit	2018
UCSC Koret Undergraduate Research Scholar	2017
University of Michigan Diversity Weekend Recruit	2017
UC Santa Barbara Academic Research Consortium (ARC) Scholar	2017
Department of Psychology Research Funding Award	2017
University of Minnesota Diversity Weekend Recruit	2016

## PUBLICATIONS

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### In-progress (Accepted)

**Alonso Blanco, V.**, Casanova, S., Centeno, B., Quinteros, K. (2025). The Role of Relationships in Enhancing Servingness at Hispanic-Serving Institutions. In Wang, S. (Ed). *What Counts as Learning? Diversifying Scholarship and Practices of Learning*. Oxford University Press.

### Peer-reviewed Articles

Casanova, S., **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Radoff, S., Cruz Silva, F. (2024). Cultivating the Transfer Landscape: Using a CRT framework to examine transfer receptivity at a Hispanic Serving Research Institution. *Journal of Social Issues*. doi: 10.1111/josi.12615

Casanova, S. & **Alonso Blanco, V.** (2023). "Transfers tend to be an afterthought": The role of institutional support for staff in creating a receptive culture for transfer students of color. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000527>

Casanova, S., **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Takimoto, A., Vazquez, A., Covarrubias, R., London, R., Azmitia, M., Lewis C. (2021). Learning in the counterspaces of not school. *Educational Studies*, 57:5, 459-475, doi: 10.1080/00131946.2021.1969936

Vaccarino-Ruiz, S.S., Quinteros, K., **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Rodriguez Ramirez, D., Langhout, R.D., Copulsky, D., & Lopezzi, M. (2021). "Yes, they were suffering, but we brought the music:" Social toxicity and possibility during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic for people who are undocumented or unhoused in Santa Cruz County. *Journal of Community Psychology in Global Perspective*, 7(1), 106-126.

Langhout, R.D., Rodriguez Ramirez, D., Vaccarino-Ruiz, S. S, **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Quinteros, K., Copulsky, D., & Lopezzi, M. (2021). Teaching and learning during a pandemic: How one graduate community psychology class quickly incorporated healing justice into our practices. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. doi: 10.1002/ajcp.12524

### Book Review

Casanova, S. & **Alonso Blanco, V.** (2021). [Review of the book Power to the Transfer Critical Race Theory and a Transfer Receptive Culture Perspectives on Access, Equity, and Diversifying Pathways in P-20 Education, by D. Jain, S.N. Bernal Melendez & A.R. Herrera]. Teachers College Record. <https://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=23872>

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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### User Experience Research Intern

May 2025 - Present

*Google, Mountain View Campus*

- Design and conduct independent research using a variety of qualitative research methods.
- Work cross-functionally with design, engineering, and product management to ensure teams makes user-centric, data-driven decisions.
- Ensure effective communication of research findings and advocate findings outside of the project team.
- Collect and analyze user behavior through lab studies, field visits, ethnography, surveys, benchmark studies, server logs and online experiments.

### Analyst

July 2020 - Present

*Cultivamos Excelencia, HSI Grant, UCSC*

- Designed mixed-method research project protocols, including method selection, data collection, organization, analysis, and disseminated findings (e.g., manuscripts, summary reports, infographics).
- Developed and implemented surveys targeting transfer students to gather insights into their experiences and academic success to inform institutional policies and program enhancement.
- Analyzed focus group data, interviews, and survey responses from transfer students to inform strategies for improving campus climate and increasing graduation rates.
- Generated formative and summative evaluation reports, infographics, and executive summaries, facilitating effective communication of grants to the U.S. Department of Education.
- Applied for and presented at national conferences and collaborated on publications with a senior researcher and two staff members.
- Presented at staff and administration meetings, sharing program successes and student experiences to inform institutional data-driven decision-making.

### Lead Graduate Researcher

Aug. 2019 - Jun. 2024

*Department of Psychology, Dr.Saskias Casanova, UCSC*

- Designed, executed, and analyzed interviews and surveys from Latinx students and families.
- Supervised and trained six undergraduate research assistants in conducting interviews.
- Collaborated with site staff, senior researchers, and undergraduate students to teach a research course.
- Conducted a literature review on the relationship between learning environments and student academic achievement to apply for research grants and national conferences.
- Developed meeting agendas and presentations and disseminated all follow-up items and formal action.

### Graduate Student Researcher (GSR)

Jun. 2023 - Oct. 2023

*Institutional Research, Assessment & Policy Studies, Dr.Anna Sher, UCSC*

- Generated customized tables, charts, and analytical summaries, emphasizing equity in learning outcomes for social sciences and STEM undergraduate program.
- Guided Biology and Anthropology departments to enhance student learning by performing various quantitative data analyses using SPSS.

### GSR

Jan. 2019 - Jun. 2022

*New Generation Learning, Dr.Su-hua Wang, UCSC*

- Researched strengths and learning practices that minoritized students bring to learning environments.
- Compiled a progress report that summarizes completed and planned research activities.

**Researcher**

Aug. 2017 - Jun. 2018

*Department of Psychology, Dr. Rebecca Covarrubias UCSC*

Senior thesis title: *The role of family and motivation on the academic achievement of first-generation Latinx college students*

- Conducted survey analyses on the link between family support and grades for Latinx students.
- Reviewed literature on the educational experiences of children from migrant farmworker families.

**Researcher**

Jun. 2017 - Aug. 2017

*Department of Counseling Psychology, Dr. Melissa Morgan-Consoli, UCSB*

- Coded 102 college student interviews using Constructivist Grounded Theory.
- Initiated an extensive literature review on familismo and resilience among Latinx college students.

**Lead Research Assistant**

Dec. 2015 - Jun. 2018

*Department of Psychology, Dr. Christy Byrd, UCSC*

- Examined immigration status as a moderator for the link between stress and microaggressions.
- Supervised six research assistants and assisted with data analysis.
- Administered surveys and managed participant compensation.
- Screened and coded over 2,000 articles about microaggressions and school racial climate.

**Research Assistant**

Dec. 2014 - Jun. 2015

*Department of Psychology, Dr. Barbara Rogoff, UCSC*

- Examined cultural differences in Mexican American and European American children's learning.
- Gathered and organized video data and assisted in the development of a coding manual.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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**California Community College Internship Program Fellow**

Sept. 2024 - Present

- Conducted classroom observations, developed lesson plans, and led a classroom session under the mentorship of experienced community college faculty in Psychology.
- Developed a course outline of record and created teaching materials for Qualitative Research Methods.

**Teaching Assistant, PSYC 182: Qualitative Research Methods, UCSC**

Summer 2024

- Taught and developed lesson plans for two discussion sections for 66 undergraduate students.
- Provided office hours, tracked student participation, and evaluated midterm papers.
- Guided students through research projects, employing interpretive phenomenological analysis, grounded theory, and narrative inquiry techniques.

**Arts Academy Teacher, Santa Cruz**

Feb. 2022 - Sept. 2023

- Taught an after-school research and college-focused course to 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Latinx middle school students.
- Created weekly lesson plans and mentored undergraduate research assistants to work with students.

**Writing Coach, PSYC 159R Achievement Disparities, UCSC**

Fall 2022

Responsible for providing individual and group tutorial sessions to students.

- Focused on helping students understand course concepts, develop writing strategies, and improve writing and critical thinking skills through reviewing and discussing student work.

**Writing Coach, PSYC 159: Psychology & Social Activism, UCSC** Fall 2021

- Developed writing and critical thinking skills through reviewing and discussing student work.
- Assisting students to build and strengthen study strategies and methods for independent work.

**Teaching Assistant, PSYC 147: Psychology & Law, UCSC** Winter 2020

- Designed and instructed two discussion sections for 66 undergraduates, covering the intersection of law and psychology.
- Held office hours, tracked student participation, and graded midterm papers.
- Explored topics such as legal and criminal responsibility, discrimination, and legal punishment, bridging gaps between legal fiction and psychological realities.

**Instructional Assistant, PSYC 1: Introduction to Psychology, UCSC** Spring 2018

- Taught and developed lesson plans for a discussion section for 20 undergraduate students.
- Held office hours and tracked student participation, attendance, and performance.

**Tutor, Center for Farmworker Families, Watsonville** May 2016 - Jan. 2017

- Tutored Math and English in the homes of elementary students from farmworker families.
- Informed parents about educational and community resources available for student success.

## **PROFESSIONAL FIELD EXPERIENCE**

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**Infographics Producer, Academic Affairs, UCSC** Apr. 2023 - Jun. 2023

- Represented data visually and supported communication of accessible and engaging materials.
- Collaborated with unit leadership to collect and analyze data and produce infographics.

**Diversity Programs Lead Intern, Chancellor's Office, UCSC** Jul. 2020 - Oct. 2021

- Creating and implementing educational modules for undergraduate interns and professional staff.
- Providing feedback and support for student research projects and presentations of research findings.

**Graduate Mentor Coordinator, CE, HSI Initiative, UCSC** Jul. 2019 - Jul. 2020

- Developed, planned, and oversaw culturally sustainable trainings and events for 15 Ph.D. students.
- Coordinated orientation events for 15 graduate Ph.D. students and 30 community college students.

**Academic Advisor, Retention Department, National University** Nov. 2018 - Aug. 2019

- Cultivated student development persistence through individualized engagement and course planning.
- Assessed student needs and provided holistic advising leveraging multiple support resources.

**Senior Academic Coach, Educational Partnership Center, GEAR UP, UCSC** Jun. 2018 - Oct. 2018

- Provided holistic advising to 350 underrepresented high school graduates and their parents.
- Developed and coordinated academic, financial, and professional development workshops.

**Assistant Coordinator, CE, HSI Initiative, UCSC** Sept. 2017 - Jun. 2018

- Co-developed and co-coordinated culturally relevant trainings for graduate student mentors.
- Evaluated program events through surveys and developed reports of findings for campus partners.

**Academic Intern, Educational Partnership Center, GEAR UP, UCSC** Sept. 2016 - Jun. 2018

- Provided academic and professional counseling to 300 minoritized high school students.

- Assisted first-generation high school students with college applications and financial aid applications.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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### Peer-reviewed presentations

**Alonso Blanco, V., & Silvia Cruz, F.** (2025, May). Building Belonging: Effective Support Strategies for Latinx Transfer Students. Talk accepted for the 2025 *National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in Higher Education* Annual Conference. New York, NY.

**Alonso Blanco, V., & Casanova, S.** (2025, April). Navigating transitions: Enhancing support for undocumented transfer students in Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). Talk accepted for the 2025 *American Educational Research Association* Annual Conference. Denver, Colorado.

**Alonso Blanco, V. & Casanova, S.** (2024, June). Examining academic resilience of transfer students of color in STEM. Talk presented at the *Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Conference*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Alonso Blanco, V., Casanova, S., Radoff, S. Silvia Cruz, F.** (2023, June). Supporting transfer students of color: Family, peers, and student services. Talk presented at the *Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Conference*. Denver, Colorado.

Agarwal, K.\*, Casanova, S., **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Roaf, A. (2023, June). Importance of relationships: STEM and non-STEM transfer students of color. Talk presented at the *Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Conference*. Denver, Colorado.

Casanova, S. **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Radoff, S., Silvia Cruz, F. (2023, May). Creating a transfer champion workgroup for racial equity. Talk presented at the *National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in Higher Education* Annual Conference. New Orleans, Louisiana

Casanova, S. **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Radoff, S., Silvia Cruz, F. (2023, April). Developing a strengths-based transfer receptive culture for Latinx transfer students at a Hispanic Serving Institution. Talk presented at the 2023 *American Educational Research Association* Annual Conference. Chicago, Illinois.

**Alonso Blanco, V.**, Casanova, S. (2023, April). Exploring Latinx middle school students' and their mothers' familial and cultural strengths. Talk presented at the 2023 *American Educational Research Association* Annual Conference. Chicago, Illinois.

Casanova, S., **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Abu-Samaha, A. (2023, March). Fostering belonging for Latinx adolescents in a Youth Participatory Action Research class. Poster presented at the *Society for Research in Child Development* Biennial meeting.

Casanova, S., **Alonso Blanco, V.**, Abu-Samaha, A., Moreto, J., Al-saegh, S., Garcia, D. (2022, October). Conexiones Culturales: Creating intergenerational knowledge and cultivating community through a Youth Participatory Action Research Partnership. Talk presented at the *All-In: Co-Creating Knowledge for Justice Conference*. UCSC.



**Alonso Blanco, V.,** Casanova, S., Radoff, S. Rodas Lara, A. (2022, June). Academic empowerment and self-efficacy of STEM transfer students of color. Poster presented at the *Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Conference*. San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Rodas Lara, A., **Alonso Blanco, V.,** Casanova, S. (2022, April). Sense of belonging and self-efficacy in STEM transfer students of color. Poster presented at *Spartan Psychological Association Research Conference*. San Jose State University.

**Alonso Blanco, V.,** Casanova, S., Radoff, S. (2021, August). Examining institutional practices and attitudes towards transfer students of color to develop a transfer receptive research institution. Talk presented at the *Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) Virtual Conference*.

**Alonso Blanco, V.,** Ramirez Manriquez, E. (2021, March). Developing a transfer pipeline to a research university for Latinx students using transfer receptive culture. Paper presented at the *American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE) National Virtual Conference*.

**Alonso Blanco, V.,** Valle, I., Covarrubias, R. & Casanova, S. (2020, April). The role of family and motivation on the academic achievement of Latinx first-generation college students. Roundtable Session. 2020 *AERA Annual Conference*. San Francisco, CA. <http://tinyurl.com/wfb335h> (Conference Canceled).

**Alonso Blanco, V.,** Alfaro, O., Boults, M., Camacho, A., Ren, J. (2018, June). The first-generation experience: Exploring challenges and coping strategies amongst first-generation students. Poster presented at *Psi Chi Conference*. UCSC.

**Alonso Blanco, V.,** Sanchez, A., Morgan-Consoli, M. (2017, August). Exploring types of familismo and their role in how Mexican American college students overcome adversity. Poster presented at *Summer Undergraduate and Graduate Research Colloquium*. University of California, Santa Barbara.

**Alonso Blanco, V.,** Byrd, C. (2017, April). The effects of perceived microaggressions on the stress levels of college students of color. Poster presented at *Spartan Psychological Association Research Conference*. San Jose State University.

#### Invited Presentations

Loera, D., Mejia, Y., Guerra, N., **Alonso Blanco, V.** (2024, January). Cultura, crecimiento y conexión: Reframing personal and professional development in HSI student leadership. *Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE)*. Virtual event.

Casanova, S., **Alonso-Blanco, V.,** Radoff, S., Cruz Silva, F. Cultivamos Excelencia: Transfer Receptivity at UC Santa Cruz: Evaluating and cultivating a receptive culture for community college transfer students of color. (2023). Presentation Briefing for *Associate Vice-Chancellor of Student Success and Equity Meeting; Humanities Division Undergraduate Directors & Advisers Meeting; Admissions Directors & Associate Directors Meeting; Interim Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs Meeting*. UCSC

Loera, D., Mejia, Y., Guerra, N., **Alonso Blanco, V.** (2022, January). Cultura, crecimiento y conexión: Reframing personal and professional development in HSI student leadership. *Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE)*. Virtual event.

**Alonso Blanco, V.** (2021, April). Incorporating family strengths to build an inclusive campus climate for undocumented community college students. Talk presented at *Alumni Week – Community Supported Learning During the Pandemic and Beyond*. UCSC.

**Alonso Blanco, V.** (2020, May). Incorporating family strengths to build an inclusive campus climate for undocumented community college students. Talk presented at *New Generation Learning Graduate Student Flash Talks*. UCSC.

**Alonso Blanco, V., Valle, I., Covarrubias, R.** (2018, June). The role of family and motivation on the academic achievement of Latinx first-generation college students. Poster presented at *Koret Foundation Symposium*. UCSC.

**Alonso Blanco, V., Sanchez, A., Morgan-Consoli, M.** (2017, December). Exploring types of familismo and their role in how Mexican American college students overcome adversity. Poster presented at *Symposium for Undergraduate Research at UCSC, Humanities and Social Sciences*. UCSC

**Alonso Blanco, V., Sanchez, A., Morgan-Consoli, M.** (2017, August). Exploring types of familismo and their role in how Mexican American college students overcome adversity. Talk presented at *ARC/UC Lead Summer Research Symposium*. University of California, Santa Barbara.

\*Undergraduate student

## **RELEVANT SERVICE**

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**Reviewer**, Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE) Scholarship, 2022 - Present  
**Steering Committee**, Coalition of Undocumented Scholars, and Professionals in Psychology (CUSPP)

**Reviewer**, Educational Studies Journal, 2022

**Juror**, Annual California State University Systemwide Student Research Competition, April 2022

**Mentor**, UCSC Building Belonging Program, September 2019-2021

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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American Psychological Association (APA)

American Evaluation Association (AEA)

American Educational Research Association  
(AERA)

Coalition of Undocumented Scholars and  
Professionals in Psychology (CUSPP)