

# DENNIS ESPEJO

[espejo@upenn.edu](mailto:espejo@upenn.edu)

## EDUCATION

**University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education (GSE)**

Master of Science in Education | GPA: 4.0

Major: Higher Education

**Philadelphia, PA**

Expected May 2025

**University of Pittsburgh, Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences**

Bachelor of Science | GPA: 3.78

Major: Psychology

Minors: Spanish and Africana Studies

Certificate Programs: Afro Latin American and Afro Latinx studies | Latin American and Caribbean Studies

**Pittsburgh, PA**

April 2024

## AWARDS AND HONORS

Best Paper Winner, International Conference on Quantitative Ethnography (2024)

Dean's Scholar (Merit Scholarship), University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (GSE)

GSE One to Grow Fellow (2024-2025)

Dean's List, Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

### Higher Education

Data disaggregation within Latine identity in higher education

Accessibility to higher education for low-income communities of color (Latino, Black, and Afro-Latino)

Use of geospatial data science to measure impact of geography and proximity to institutions of higher education on the educational trajectory of low-income communities of color

Factors influencing access and retention in higher education for Latino, Black, and Afro-Latino communities

### Mental Health & Racial Perception

Examining mental health difference between Black Latinos and Non-Black Latinos

Impact of differences in racial perception and skin tone on Latino mental health

## PUBLICATIONS

Dache, A., Sun, J., **Espejo, D.** (2024) Como las mareas del océano: A Quantitative Ethnography of Caribbean Latino and Afro-Latino Identity and Education in El Norte de Philadelphia. International Conference on Quantitative Ethnography.

Reid-Vazquez, M., **Espejo, D.**, Herndon, I. (In Press) Dialogues in Afrolatinidad: Advancing Afro-Latinx Studies in the Black Digital Public Sphere. The Afro-Latin@ Reader: Volume 2.

## RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Dache, A., Sun, J., **Espejo, D.** (2024, November 5) Como las mareas del océano: A Quantitative Ethnography of Caribbean Latino and Afro-Latino Identity and Education in El Norte de Philadelphia. International Conference on Quantitative Ethnography. Philadelphia, PA

Figuerero, V., Vicente, M. J., **Espejo, D.**, Labrousse, D., Shannon, L., & Flores A. T. (2024, October 17) Dimensions of Racial Identity, Discrimination, and Attitudes as Mental Health Pathways among AfroLatinxs in the United

States. The National Latinx Psychological Association. San Juan, PR.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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### University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education

Philadelphia, PA

Graduate Research Assistant

August 2024 - Present

- Collaborated on data collection efforts based on Latino communities in Philadelphia, analyzing their connection to nearby institutions of higher education.
- Undertook training in quantitative ethnography, assisting with the production of detailed networks that illustrate the ecological impacts on educational and occupational trajectories of North Philadelphia residents
- Responsible for synthesization and summary of relevant literature for lab's research projects.

### AfroLatinx Mental Health Lab

Pittsburgh, PA

Research Assistant

January 2024- Present

- Reviewed over 200 abstracts and synthesized literature on Afro-Latinx mental health and Latinx racial attitudes for the lab's main research projects.
- Conducted extensive literature searches and analysis using various databases.
- Constructed survey measures for the "Understanding Pathways to AfroLatinx Mental Health" project contributing to the lab's current working paper.

### Bilingual Phonology Lab

Pittsburgh, PA

Research Assistant

July 2023- April 2024

- Proficiently managed participant data input and organization tasks for the Bilingual Phonology Lab, ensuring accuracy and accessibility of research data.
- Maintained comprehensive oversight of physical participant files, guaranteeing their systematic organization and easy retrieval.

## PROJECTS

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### North Philadelphia Project at UPENN Graduate School of Education

Philadelphia, PA

Research Assistant

September 2023- June 2024

- Specializing in the nuanced methodology of Quantitative Ethnography through rigorous training under University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education PhD student and faculty.
- Engaged in a collaborative research endeavor with esteemed master's and PhD students at the University of Pennsylvania, exploring the intricate relationship between Latino communities in North Philadelphia and higher education.
- Undertook the exclusive role of coding Spanish speaking focus group and interview data, showcasing a high level of individual responsibility and expertise.

### Understanding Pathways to AfroLatinx Mental Health Project

Pittsburgh, PA

Research Assistant

September 2023-Present

- Conducting a comprehensive review and organization of study measures, ensuring accuracy and relevance to the research objectives.
- Engaging in critical discussions about study questions, contributing valuable insights for the development of the research framework.

### Dialogues in Afrolatinidad

Pittsburgh, PA

Publisher/Software Specialist/Guest Speaker

October 2020- April 2022

- Organized the marketing, publication, and logistics of 14 episodes of Dialogues in Afrolatindad, one of the first podcasts gathering first-hand accounts from prominent scholars and figures in the field of Afro-Latin American Studies
- Participated in a guest speaker role, sharing my experiences as a Dominican-American student in Higher Education for the serie's final episode of season 1.
- Co-authoring an article for the second edition of The Afro-Latino Reader, drawing from the team's experiences with the podcast and collected narratives.

## **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

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**We Support Diversity of Mind (WSDM) at UPENN Graduate School of Education**

**Philadelphia, PA**

President

July 2024- Present

- Assembled an executive board of 6 passionate graduate students, committed to promoting diversity and inclusivity in higher education.
- Organizing three events per semester focused on academic, social, and community engagement, aimed at fostering a strong community for BIPOC students within Upenn's Graduate School of Education.

**College House and Academic Services at the University of Pennsylvania**

**Philadelphia, PA**

Graduate Resident Advisor

August 2024- Present

- Organizing and leading programs that highlight and celebrate Latine/Hispanic identities, contributing to a more inclusive environment for the entire college house.
- Cultivating an inclusive and supportive community on my assigned floor of 20 students by advising residents and addressing their needs, ensuring a positive and engaging living experience.

**Residence Life at the University of Pittsburgh**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

Resident Assistant (RA)

August 2022- April 2024

- Managed the Resident Assistant (RA) role for two years, proactively establishing and maintaining a supportive and an inclusive living environment for 54 residents.
- Demonstrated excellence in mentorship, skillfully resolving conflicts, and efficiently managing programs.
- Fostered a positive impact on residents and maintained a commitment to enhancing the campus community and prioritizing student well-being.

**Latinx Student Association (LSA)**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

President, Vice President, Business Manager

June 2020 – April 2023

- Demonstrated excellence in administrative tasks, member retention, and community development while progressing through leadership roles from first Vice President to President of 100+ Latino students.
- Facilitated meaningful weekly discussions about current social justice issues in the Latinx community to educate and empower our diverse members.
- Led the development of fundraising and business management initiatives, nurturing key vendor relations, and diligently overseeing expense tracking.

## **INTERNSHIPS**

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**Department of Africana Studies at the University of Pittsburgh**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

Student Intern

September 2024- April 2024

- Showcasing versatility by undertaking various responsibilities at the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Africana Studies, including serving as a front desk representative for the department.
- Created the department's first qualtrics survey used by student interns during classroom visits to connect students with the center and programs they indicated being interested in.

- Provided crucial administrative support, managed inquiries, directed visitors, and contributed to the smooth operation of the center.

### **Center for Ethnic Studies Research**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

Student Intern

August 2023- August 2024

- Managed the Center for Ethnic Studies Research's Instagram page, curating content and highlighting over 20 POC student leaders across campus.
- Supported faculty research by conducting literature reviews and assisting with the development of study measures.
- Collaborated in planning and hosting the annual Latinx Connect Conference, fostering engagement with diverse Latinx scholars across the U.S.

### **Afrolatinidad Studies Initiative**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

Social Media Manager/ Project Coordinator

January 2021- August 2022

- Pioneered the Afrolatinidad Studies Initiative as its inaugural student intern, establishing the initiative's Instagram presence to foster a thriving community on campus.
- Published Dialogues in Afrolatinidad, the initiative's podcast, showcasing expertise in content creation, research, and project management.

### **Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS)**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

Student Ambassador

August 2020 – April 2022

- Promoted undergraduate programs and events in Latin American Studies while representing the institution across campus.
- Skillfully edited and disseminated video and audio content to enhance outreach efforts for Pitt's Center for Latin American Studies, extending its impact and engagement.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### **Department of Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

Teaching Assistant

January 2024- April 2024

- Assumed the role as a Teaching Assistant for a Psychology Research Methods lecture, collaborating closely with the lead instructor to deliver insightful and engaging lectures for undergraduate students.
- Assisted in the planning and creation of instructional materials, with a focus on developing interactive activities and assessments to ensure a comprehensive understanding of research methods in the field of Psychology.

## **SKILLS**

Language: Fluent English & Spanish

Software: Intermediate Python, R, and Java