Transfronterizando las Matemáticas: Surveillance and Work in the Mathematics Classroom

Alexandra Aguilar, Dr. Carlos Nicolas Gómez Marchant, & Chandel F. Burgess
University of Texas at Austin

330 Derrick Hall
2:15–3:15PM
Friday, April 1st 2022

Caminante, no hay puentes, se hacen puentes al andar - Gloria Anzaldúa (2015, p. 254)

In this talk, we challenge borders, particularly those of mathematics and mathematics education research. Guided by Latino critical theory and borderland theory, we maintain that racism is endemic within social institutions (i.e., schools, churches; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Feagin & Cobas, 2014). We recognize the dominance of white supremacy in our field of STEM education and the role K–12 schools and higher education institutions play in perpetuating and maintaining the oppression of Learners of Color (e.g., Martin, 2000; Yosso, 2006). Mathematics operates as a white institutional space. Traditional ways of teaching mathematics perpetuate narratives of who belongs in mathematics by failing to acknowledge contributions of other cultures to the mathematical sciences (Gutiérrez, 2017) and the way mathematics has become a gatekeeper for social mobility (Martin, Gholson, & Leonard, 2010; Stinson, 2004). As part of the Mi Raza, Mi Lengua, y Mis Matematicas (Mi3) Collective, we are dedicated to the resistance, interrogation, and disruption of white supremacy for the betterment of Raza learners and historically and contemporarily excluded groups. Our talk centers on challenging considerations of mathematics and mathematics education to decenter dominant narratives (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). In particular, we’ll focus on one current project on surveillance and work in the mathematics classroom. In it, we explore student feelings of being surveilled to conform to dominant ways of being and communicating mathematically, as well as the work they do adapting to that surveillance. Our goal of analyzing and acknowledging student experiences of surveillance is to inform the development of more equitable classroom spaces and research projects.