

2nd Decolonial Praxis Conference

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Project Summary

The main objective of organizing the 2nd Decolonial Praxis Conference was to create not only an academic space but also an open platform for activists, community organizers, and academics to discuss decolonial theories, pedagogies, research methods, and praxis, with a particular focus on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities. The conference successfully met this objective, by creating not only this space, but also a transnational network of decolonial praxis scholars.

During this 2nd conference, we were able to solidify this open and safe space and network for both academics and activists, including community organizers from the local community and from other regions and countries. This helped increase the impact of the participants' projects and research, while also facilitating collaboration on new joint projects.

Another objective was to ensure the conference was accessible to people with disabilities and individuals from non-English-speaking regions. This was achieved by hosting a hybrid conference, allowing speakers and attendees to participate either online or in person. Additionally, we employed a language justice approach by offering consecutive interpretation in both English and Spanish throughout the conference, which allowed participants from Mexico and Latinx populations in the U.S. to be included in the discussion, people who are normally left out due to western-centrism and coloniality of knowledge.

Impact

We had a positive impact in several areas. First, we received feedback from multiple presenters and attendees that this was the only conference they had attended with Spanish-English interpreting throughout, emphasizing the importance of language justice. Second, we created a transnational network of decolonial praxis scholars with the objective of fostering connections and boosting collaborative efforts. Third, this year, we incorporated a mental health component into the conference. We featured a photographic exhibition on the "Mental Health Experiences of Underrepresented Graduate Students," hosted by Dr. Evelyn Vazquez, and a Healing Circle led by individuals from Cal State LA.

We had a total of 105 participants. Most of the attendees and presenters attended the conference in person. Presentations were given in both Spanish and English. We had presenters and attendees from various U.S. states, as well as from Mexico, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Venezuela, Palestine, Uganda, and the Philippines.

Most of the attendees were students, including both graduate and undergraduate students. However, we also had members of the Inland Empire community. The organizing committee, staff, and interpreters were all volunteers and students (including us). Most of the presenters and attendees were Latinx, Black, and Indigenous.