

Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar

William and Mary

Department of Sociology

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS AND AFFILIATIONS

2025-Present	Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, William and Mary
2025-Present	External Affiliate, Population Research Institute, The Pennsylvania State University
2023-2025	Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Sociology and Criminology, The Pennsylvania State University
2023-2025	Postdoctoral Fellow Affiliate, Population Research Institute, The Pennsylvania State University

EDUCATION

2023	Ph.D. Sociology, Rice University, Houston, TX
2014	M.S. Applied Sociology, University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, TX
2013	Archer Center Graduate Program in Public Policy, University of Texas System, Washington, D.C.
2009	B.A. Corporate Communications and Public Affairs & Spanish, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Education, Religion, Research Design and Methods, Stratification and Inequality, Race and Ethnicity, Urban and Community Sociology

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Awarded, External

2021-2023	The Sociology of Science and Religion: Identity and Belief Formation Funding Initiative, Sociology Graduate Student Fellowship, (\$56,500).
2020-2021	Ford Foundation, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, Dissertation Fellowship, (\$28,000).
2020-2021	American Educational Research Association, Minority Dissertation Fellowship, (\$19,000~declined).
2020	National Science Foundation, Dissertation Improvement Grant, (\$14,116, Grant #2001983).
2019-2021	Society for the Social Scientific Study of Religion, Pathways to Leadership Program Travel Award, (\$1,500).

- 2019 Society for the Social Scientific Study of Religion, Student Travel Grant, (\$710).
- 2018 W.T. Grant Foundation, Scholarship-Travel Grant, ASA Sociology of Education Section, (\$750).
- 2013 The University of Texas System, Graduate Archer Fellowship Program in Public Policy

Awarded, Internal

- 2023-2025 The Pennsylvania State University, Department of Sociology and Criminology, Research Funding Award, (\$20,000).
- 2021 Rice University, Department of Sociology, Min Zhou Research Grant, (\$1,500).
- 2019 Rice University, Social Sciences Research Institute, Graduate Student Association Travel Fund Grant, (\$500).

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed

- 2026 Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, Esther Chan, and Sharan Kaur Mehta. “Comparing Confidence in Institutions among Latino and White Catholics and Evangelicals: Exploring Religious Differences.” *Social Problems* 73(1):223–40. doi:[10.1093/socpro/spae066](https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spae066).
- 2025 Holzman, Brian, **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, Irina Chukhray, and Weiqi Guo. “Sorted and Tracked: English Learners, College-Level Course-Taking in High School, and Postsecondary Opportunity.” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. doi:10.3102/01623737251392299.
- 2021 Thomson, Robert A., **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. “The Very Ivory Tower: Pathways Reproducing Racial-Ethnic Stratification in Science.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30:1-21.
- 2019 **Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez**, Brandon Vaidyanathan, Elaine Howard Ecklund, and Adriana Garcia. “Challenging Evolution in Public Schools: Race, Religion, and Attitudes toward Teaching Creationism.” *Socius: Sociological Research in a Dynamic World* 5:1-13.
- 2016 **Sánchez, Esmeralda**, Nicholas Vargas, Rebecca Burwell, Jessica Hamar-Martinez, Milagros Peña, and Edwin I. Hernandez. “Latino Congregations and Youth Educational Expectations.” *Sociology of Religion* 77(2): 171-92.*

*REPRINTED 2018. In *Sociology of Religion: A Reader, Third Edition*, edited by Susanne Monahan, William Mirola, and Michael O. Emerson. New York: Routledge.

Under Review

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, Robert J. Thomson, and Elaine Howard Ecklund, “Race, Religion and Education Policy: Unexamined Dimensions of Support for Educational Spending and Interest in Local School Issues.” *Revise and Resubmit*

Papers in Progress

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, “Latino Religious Familism: Race, Ethnicity, Religion, and Latino College Choices.”

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, “Religious Participation as Predictor of Latino College Course-Taking Patterns and Enrollment.”

Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, “Unexamined Dimensions of Latino STEM Stratification: Latinos, Religion and STEM Outcomes.”

Reports

2020 Holzman, Brian, Mehreen Gul, **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, and Camila Cigarroa Kennedy. “Part II: Labor Market Analyses of the 60×30 Goal, Supply and Demand, and Wages in Houston and Texas,” *Houston Longitudinal Study on the Transition to College and Work (HLS)*, <https://kinder.rice.edu/research/transitioning-college-and-work-part-3-labor-market-analyses-houston-and-texas>

Featured in: *Houston Chronicle*, *Texas Standard*, *San Antonio Express-News*

2020 Holzman, Brian, **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**, and Irina Chukhray. “Inequalities in Postsecondary Attainment by English Learner Status: The Role of College-Level Course Taking,” <https://kinder.rice.edu/research/inequalities-postsecondary-attainment-english-learner-status-role-college-level-course>

2019 Chukhray, Irina and **Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar**. “Harris County’s College Advising Needs,” <https://kinder.rice.edu/research/harris-county’s-college-advising-needs>

HONORS AND AWARDS

2026 Inclusive Excellence Champion Award, Office of Inclusive Excellence, William and Mary

2026 Latino Social Science Pipeline Initiative’s Junior Scholars Symposium, University of California, Berkeley

2025 The Law, Policy, and Governance in Higher Education Mentoring Roundtables, Center for the Study of Higher Education, College of Education, Pennsylvania State University

2024 Faculty of Arts and Sciences Research and Academic Exchange Scholar, Harvard University

2024 Dissertation of the Year, Honorable Mention, Religion and Education Special Interest Group, American Educational Research Association

2023 Wall and Helen Hall Best Graduate Student Paper Award, Department of Sociology, Rice University

2019-2021 Pathways to Leadership Program, Society for the Social Scientific Study of Religion

- 2017 Graduate Research Fellowship Program, Honorable Mention, National Science Foundation
- 2017 Scholar Invitee, Religion and Democracy Convening, The Fetzer Institute, Kalamazoo, MI
- 2016 Scholar Invitee, Unlocking Latino Millennial Civic Potential Convening, The Aspen Institute's Latinos and Society Program, Aspen, CO*
- *Report produced as result of convening: The Aspen Institute. 2016. "Activating Latino Millennial Civic Power," Washington, D.C.: U.S.
- 2014 Phi Kappa Phi, Honor Society, Initiated

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Talks (Selected)

- 2025 "Sorted and Tracked: English Learners, College-Level Course-Taking, and Postsecondary Opportunity," Engineering Cohesive Communities: Social Integration of Foreign-Born Americans Conference, Institute for Immigrant Integration Research and Policy, Rockefeller Institute on Government
- 2024 "Latinos, Faith and Education: Examining Religion's Role in Shaping Latino College and STEM Outcomes," Religion and Education Special Interest Group Business Meeting, American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting
- 2024 "Latino Religious Familism and Proximity: How Religious Organizations Matter for Latino College Choices," Higher Education Program Speaker Series, College of Education, The Pennsylvania State University
- 2022 "Latino Religious Familism and Proximity: How Religion Matters for Latino College Choices," Department of Sociology Colloquium Series, University of Texas at Arlington
- 2020 "New Results from the Fourth Wave of the National Congregations Study," Association for the Sociology of Religion Conference, (canceled due to pandemic)

Conference Presentations

- 2026 "Religious Affiliation as a Predictor of Latino Higher Education Enrollment," Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting
- 2024 "Religion as an Overlooked Predictor of Latino College Outcomes," Poster, Conference of Ford Fellows, Washington, DC
- 2024 "Unexamined Dimensions of Latino STEM Stratification: Race, Religion and STEM Outcomes," Roundtable, American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- 2022 “Rooted and Grounded in Faith: Latino Youth, Parents and Faith Leader Responses to Perceived Conflicts in Science Education,” Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, Baltimore, Maryland
- 2022 “Time, Money and the Congregational (Dis)Advantage: Latino Perceived Barriers to Degrees in Science and Medicine and the Intervening Role of Congregations,” Panel Session, Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, California
- 2022 “No Place Like Church?: Proximity, Religious Participation and Latino College Pathways,” Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, California
- 2022 “How Congregational Participation Shapes the STEM Higher Education Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Poster, American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting (Virtual)
- 2021 “Latinos, Faith and Science Education: How Congregational Participation Shapes the Science Education Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting
- 2021 “Religion and Latino College Outcomes: Unexamined Dimensions of Latino Higher Education Attainment,” Poster Session, Conference of Ford Fellows
- 2021 “Latino Youth and Religious Institutions: Unexamined Contexts Shaping Latino College Outcomes,” Refereed Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting
- 2021 “Inequalities in Postsecondary Attainment by English Learner Status: The Role of College-Level Course-Taking,” Society for the Study of Social Problems Annual Meeting, with Brian Holzman, (Co-author: Irina Chukhray)
- 2021 “How Congregational Participation Shapes the College Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Refereed Roundtable, American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting
- 2021 “Timing to Reclassification for English Learners in Texas: Exploring the Role of District Mobility,” American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, (Co-author: Elizabeth Cashiola)
- 2021 “Race, Religion and Education Policy: Unexamined Dimensions of Support for National Educational Spending and Interest in Local School Issues,” Association for Education Finance and Policy Annual Conference, with Robert A. Thomson (Co-author: Elaine Howard Ecklund)
- 2021 “How Religious Participation Shapes the College Outcomes of Latino Youth,” Sociology of Education Association Annual Conference
- 2020 “An Overlooked Predictor of Latino Higher Education Outcomes: Religious Affiliation,” Virtual Academic Exchange Session, Annual Conference of Ford Fellows

- 2020 “Comparing Confidence in Institutions Among Latino and White Catholics and Evangelicals,” Virtual Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting (Co-authors: Sharan Mehta, Esther Chan)
- 2020 “A Comparative Analysis of College Advising at Ten School Districts in a Large Metropolitan Area,” American Education Research Association, (Co-author: Irina Chukhray)
- 2019 “Producing ‘Colorblind’ Racial Frames in the Workplace: Bringing Religion to the Table.” Presidential Theme Session, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, with Elaine Howard Ecklund and Sharan Mehta
- 2019 “Race, Religion and Education Policy: Examining Differences in Attitudes Toward Educational Spending and Local School Issues.” Refereed Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, New York, New York (Co-authors: Robert Thomson, Elaine Howard Ecklund)
- 2019 “Race, Religion and Public Policy: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Evangelicals and Catholics on Contested Public Policy Debates.” Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting, New York, New York
- 2019 “Inequalities in Educational Attainment by English Learner Status: A Case of Leveled Tracking.” American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada, with Brian Holzman (Co-author: Irina Chukhray)
- 2018 “Race, Religion, and Attitudes Toward Teaching Creationism.” Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV, (Co-authors: Brandon Vaidyanathan, Elaine Howard Ecklund, Adriana Garcia)
- 2018 “Inequalities in Educational Attainment by English Learner Status: A Case of Leveled Tracking.” Association for the Study of Higher Education Annual Conference, Tampa, FL, with Brian Holzman (Co-author: Irina Chukhray)
- 2018 “Religious Affiliation and Confidence in Institutions: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Catholics and Protestants.” Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, (Co-authors: Sharan Mehta, Esther Chan)
- 2018 “Racial Differences in Promotion, Publication, and Pay among US Physicists and Biologists.” Refereed Roundtable, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, with Robert J. Thomson
- 2018 “Inequalities in Educational Attainment by English Learner Status.” Texas Higher Education Symposium, Houston, TX, with Brian Holzman, (Co-author: Irina Chukhray)
- 2015 “The Interplay Between Teacher Professional Development and Community Development: Building Capacity in International Settings.” Hawaii International Conference on Education Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI, with Dr. Hector Rivera, Ninfa Tarango, Genesis Morales and Raul Magdaleno

- 2014 “The Latino Church and Education: Studying Educational Expectations Among Latino Youth Congregants.” Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA
- 2014 “Studying the Academic Path of ELL Newcomer Students in the Schooling Process.” National Association for Bilingual Education Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, with Dr. Hector Rivera and Emma Cepeda
- 2012 “Linking Programs to Create Meaning: Enhancing the Academic Path for ELLs.” National Association for Bilingual Education Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX, with Coral Balcazar and Genesis Morales

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2026 “Qualitative Sociology,” Instructor of Record, William and Mary, Spring
- 2025 “Sociology of Education,” Instructor of Record, William and Mary, Fall
- 2025 “Race and Ethnic Inequality in the U.S.,” Instructor of Record, William and Mary, Fall
- 2022 “Introduction to Sociology,” Instructor of Record, Rice University, Summer
- 2019 “Data, Ethics and Society,” Teaching Assistant, Rice University, Spring
- 2018 “Latinos, Religion and Education,” Guest Lecturer, University of Georgia, Spring
- 2018 “Social Statistics,” Teaching Assistant, Rice University, Spring
- 2017 “Latinos, Religion and Education,” Guest Lecturer, University of Georgia, Fall

DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2021-2022 Graduate Fellowships Coach, Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Rice University
- 2019-2020 Elected Graduate Student Representative, American Sociological Association, Religion Section
- 2019 Co-Facilitator, “Getting Help with Statistics in the Department of Sociology,” Departmental Professionalization, Rice University
- 2018-2019 Graduate Student Representative, Sociology Graduate Committee, Rice University
- 2018 Introduction of Authors, “Religion vs Science,” Book Release

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2013-2016 Director, National Hispanic Education Summit, Faith and Education Coalition
- 2010-2011 Director, Dallas Hispanic Youth Institute, Hispanic College Fund, Washington D.C., (Dallas Office)

2007-2009 Intern, Diversity and Community Engagement, Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University

PROFESSIONALIZATION EXPERIENCE

2021 Psychometrics and Scale Development Workshop, Statistical Training and Research Techniques at Rice University (STaRT@Rice)

2021 Longitudinal Data Analysis, Including Categorical Outcomes, ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research, University of Michigan

2019 Introduction to Casual Inference, Certification of Completion, Department of Statistics and Data Sciences, University of Texas at Austin

2019 Research on Teaching and Learning, Course II, Center for Teaching Excellence, Rice University

2018 Principles of Effective College Teaching, Course I, Center for Teaching Excellence, Rice University

REFEREE EXPERIENCE

American Educational Research Journal, Sociology of Religion, Sociological Forum

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Sociological Association
American Educational Research Association
Association for the Sociology of Religion
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
Sociology of Education Association