

Abigail M.E. Thornton

Los Angeles, CA Tijuana, BC, México 323.412.3627 amethornton@ucla.edu

EDUCATION

University of California Los Angeles

PhD, Education, Social Science and International/Comparative Education, expected September 2019.

Dissertation: "Learning for Social Action with Displaced Communities in Mexico Post-Deportation."

Committee: Profs. Richard Desjardins, Teresa L. McCarty, Carlos A. Torres (UCLA), Aaron Schneider (DU), and Rafael Alarcón (COLEF).

Advancement to Candidacy: December 2017.

University of California Los Angeles

Graduate Certificate, Writing Pedagogy, September 2017.

Specialization: Writing in the disciplines

University of California Los Angeles

M.A., Education, Social Science and International/Comparative Education, September 2014.

Specialization: Social Sciences and International/Comparative Education

University of Texas at Austin

B.A., Latin American Studies, May 2014.

Specialization: Comparative Government

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Migration settlement and community development

Participatory democracy and citizenship practices

Community-based action research methods

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Visiting Fellow, Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, UCSD, San Diego, CA, 2018-2019

Elwood Zillgitt & Mildred Finney Fellowship, UCLA, 2018-2019

Visiting Scholar, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Tijuana, México, 2017-2018

University Fellowship, UCLA, 2017-2018

University Fellowship, UCLA, 2016-2017

University Fellowship, UCLA, 2015-2016

Elwood Zillgitt & Mildred Finney Fellowship, UCLA, 2015-2016

Graduate Summer Research Fellowship, UCLA, 2015

University Fellowship, UCLA, 2014-2015

RELEVANT SERVICE

Casa del Migrante

2015-present

Tijuana, B.C., México

- Supporting regular operations of shelter receiving on average 20 to 30 deportees and southern migrants each day.
- Providing legal resources and information for residents to decide if they have valid asylum

- claims or can obtain some type of visa in Mexico (for non-Mexican applicants).
- Developing research agenda collaboratively with deported migrants and shelter staff to understand needs of those choosing to permanently settle in Tijuana.

PRESENTATIONS

Paper presentation, "An Ethnography of Learning for Inclusion and Radical Social Change: The Beginning of *Puente* and the Politics of Possibility Emerging Post-Deportation in Tijuana, Mexico." Comparative and International Education Society Conference, Mexico City, Mexico, March 2018.

Poster presentation, "Struggles for Self-Determination for Migrants Learning to Live in Tijuana, Mexico." Comparative and International Education Society Conference, Atlanta, GA, March 2017.

Paper presentation, "Learning in Crisis: Re-evaluating Education in a Migrant Shelter in Tijuana." Comparative and International Education Society Conference, Vancouver, BC, Canada, March 2016.

Panel participant, "Overcoming Borders: Reimagining Concepts of Immigrants, Migrant Youth Curricula, and Educational Frameworks." Californian Association of Freirean Educators Conference: Immigration and Education, UCLA, May 2015.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

UCLA Writing Programs, Los Angeles, CA

Graduate Student Researcher, June 2015 to April 2016.

- Evaluated both baseline and exit writing diagnostics for pilot research program researching undergraduate writing needs in the social sciences.

ACADEMIC NETWORKS

El Centro de Investigación de Movimientos Sociales, Tijuana (CIMSt)

Founder, Primary Researcher, April 2018 to present

El Foro Latinoamericano de Antropología del Derecho

Associate Researcher, July 2018 to present

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California Los Angeles

Teaching Fellow, January 2015 to present

Courses taught:

- **APPLING 101W:** *Introduction to Language Learning and Language Teaching*
- **APPLING 102W:** *The Nature of Learning*
- **ESL 20:** *Conversation and Fluency*
- **ESL 25:** *Academic Reading and Writing*
- **ESL 201:** *Intermediate Writing and Communication for International Graduate Students*

- *ESL 301: High Intermediate Writing and Communication for International Graduate Students*
- *ESL 24: Preparing for American Universities*

Wilshire Language School, Los Angeles, CA

English Language Instructor, November 2013 to May 2014

- Designed course for adult learners of English using the communicative teaching method.
- Utilized improvisational comedy techniques developed in previous adult learning classes for more effective results.

Alpha Lingua School, Mexico City, MEX

English Language Instructor, January 2011 to September 2013

- Taught English at several companies throughout the city.
- Adapted course material for relevance to students' interest and needs, per company.

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Restaurant Opportunities Center, New Orleans, LA

Co-Founder/Coordinator, May 2008 to March 2010

- Helped found a members-based non-profit organization for restaurant workers aimed at improving working conditions in the local restaurant industry.
- Recruited members and administered a jointly created survey of the industry to over 660 area restaurant workers; compiled a comprehensive industry report from the results of the study.
- Developed political education and job training programs for members.
- Worked with local industry partners in creating policy initiatives to better support restaurant workers, such as paid sick leave and implementing non-discriminatory hiring practices.

Interfaith Worker Justice, New Orleans, LA

Worker Center Coordinator, January 2007 to May 2008

- Established an IWJ-affiliate worker center in New Orleans to support low-wage workers in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.
- Created a workers' rights legal clinic in partnership with attorneys and worker rights advocates.
- Supported immigrant day laborers dealing with rampant wage theft in recouping lost and stolen wages.
- Taught English as a Second Language program for non-English speaking immigrant workers.

Mexico Solidarity Network, Chicago, IL

Program and Education Coordinator, September 2004 to September 2006

- Coordinated multiple educational programs between university students in the U.S. and community partners in four different regions in Mexico.
- Organized college tours in the U.S. for speakers from Mexico on issues from fair trade to immigration and human rights.
- Organized delegations in different regions of Mexico for U.S. students to study relevant issues on site.
- Assisted in development and teaching of pilot study abroad program for students in Chiapas, Mexico.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Borderland Studies
Comparative International Education Society