



Open Proposal on Academic Practices

The **undersigned** want to make public our willingness to propose and promote, with humility and as much as possible, the integration of a series of academic practices that we will detail in this document.

We are motivated by the desire to be part of **a university that is not structured primarily by neoliberal, patriarchal and elitist tendencies**. We are aware that today in the United States, 70% of teachers are hired for contingent, temporary jobs (without the promise of “tenure”), and that in recent years this **job insecurity** imposed by neoliberalism has particularly affected jobs in the Humanities.

It is within this context that, as **tenured professionals specializing in the area of Hispanic Studies** (and linked to the group ALCESXXI), we support the collective defense of an academic culture contrary to the systemic and structural violence of neoliberalism, patriarchy and intellectual elitism. This position attempts to shed light on and underline the following points:

- ▶ Intellectual work is not at all separated from but depends on the **daily material work** that is essential to the reproduction of human life in its interdependence
- ▶ University education and research in the Humanities should not be subjected to a **competitive and individualistic productivity** that only values knowledge as long as it can be translated -more directly or indirectly- into financial capital
- ▶ The production of knowledge always happens collectively, and **all sectors of society benefit from it**. The university owes its status as a space for the production of specialized knowledge to this broader framework

For all these reasons, we propose to intervene in the **academic processes of intra- and inter-institutional evaluation**: processes of teacher **recruitment**, promotion or granting of tenure, as well as for the **admission** and evaluation of the work of graduate students (including the evaluation of their doctoral theses).

In these processes, we want to defend a series of academic practices that make visible and sufficiently value the following:

- a) **the differentiated material conditions** in which the intellectual work is carried out
- b) **the plurality of forms and processes** that have a place in the production of knowledge when released from the pressure to become a commodity

In what follows, we break down a series of **concrete examples** of these types of practices, which we believe can be defended from now on from our position as teachers with tenure. We are, of course, hoping to **open a debate** that will help us to better think, **expand and improve this proposal**. In the same way, we do not believe that by defending these practices we will end the forces of neoliberalism, patriarchy and intellectual elitism in the university overnight. Nevertheless, it seems important **to add this effort to many others** that have already been carried out and to others that will undoubtedly be made in the future.

WE PROPOSE:



That relevant information about the working conditions of the candidate be made available in the evaluation processes, such as:

- a) their **detailed teaching load**:
 - how many different courses, at what levels, and number of students per class
 - access to students who are assigned as research or teaching assistants
- b) their **service responsibilities**:
 - number and type of committees
 - group and individual advising
 - institutional positions (chair, graduate chair), management and administrative work
 - study abroad programs and number of students

c) their **access to research resources:**

- economic support to travel and participate in conferences
- access to sabbaticals (detailed)
- inter-library loan
- online resources
- technical support

d) **other relevant situations or material conditions** that the evaluated person wanted to discuss, confidentially or publicly



Assess publications and activities that are not usually included in a C.V., or that are considered secondary, such as:

a) **publications in non-academic platforms:**

- books or articles in specialized or general interest publications that exceed the reach of the university
- editions and publications of collaborative projects with multiple authors
- press articles
- interviews (newspapers, radio, television)
- webs, blogs, digital files
- creative or artistic publications

b) **creation of research tools and cultural resources::**

- curatorial work (traveling exhibitions)
- expanded research: generating interviews, documents, reference materials, surveys
- creation of archives - cataloging, mapping
- distribution of materials and mediation between collectives, cultural agents and libraries
- subtitling and translation of materials
- developing web platforms

c) **community or social justice projects:**

- movie clubs, reading groups
- work with public schools
- connecting institutions with social justice collectives in joint activities
- activities encouraging academic civic engagement

d) educational projects:

- development of new courses
- independent studies
- development of seminars, talks, presentations and theatrical performances for the broader university community
- organization of writing contests for elementary and middle school students
- collaborations between institutions and between disciplines (for example: work with migrants in detention centers, with local museums, co-organization of exhibitions and competitions, etc.)
- organization of academic meetings or round tables
- organization and leadership of disciplinary and interdisciplinary work groups



Make visible the situations of job insecurity and the pressures of financial capitalism on the University, through:

- a) Assemblies in the meetings of ALCESXXI and opening of spaces for the analysis of working conditions in our departments
- b) The public denunciation of the abuses committed with student loans
- c) The strengthening of solidarity alliances between professors with tenure, without tenure and students, in order to achieve the two previous objectives
- d) The struggle for the central presence of the Humanities in our universities, opposing cuts, restructuring, capitalist demands of "productivity," and other external pressures, whether evident or disguised, that jeopardize this prominent presence.

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