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The Muted Group Video Project: Amplifying the Voices of Latinx Immigrant Students Proposal

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Title of presentation:

“The Muted Group Video Project: Amplifying the Voices of Latinx Immigrant Students”

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What research projects/community engagement activities have you participated in? How did you engage FIU students?

During Summer 2019, my Rhetorical Theory and Practice students completed the Muted Group Video Project (MGVP). The MGVP is a project I designed to help FIU students use their first-hand, personal experiences with immigration to meaningfully engage with their local community. Specifically, the FIU students created a video¹ for a local third grade class made up of 22 students, ninety percent of whom were immigrants or part of immigrant families. Given our current political climate, mainstream rhetoric surrounding immigration is often harmful and negative; therefore, one goal of the MGVP is to offer an opportunity for FIU students to present more empowering and holistic narratives to younger immigrant students.

After sharing our video with the third graders, we hosted a video conference call so that the two classes could have a face-to-face discussion. During the discussion, the students conversed in Spanish, English, and Haitian Creole, bonding over their experiences growing up in an unfamiliar culture and what it means to be an immigrant student.

How does your work support the goals of public humanities?

The MGVP invites students to put theory into practice in culturally relevant ways. Not only does this aim support the goals of Rhetorical Theory and Practice, but it also aligns with public humanities’ efforts to promote public communicative practices and facilitate interactions beyond the physical walls of the classroom.

What were some of the challenges you encountered through this process?

There were two main challenges encountered during this process: 1) Not all of the FIU students had personal experiences with immigration, and 2) We did not have a lot of class time to devote to this project due to other course content that needed to be covered.

¹ The completed video can be viewed here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gidpym4y_aQ&feature=youtu.be.