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STUDIES PROGRAM AT SOUTHERN  
ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, CARBONDALE  
(1958-1985)

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A NOBLE DREAM: THE INTER-AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM AT SOUTHERN  
ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, CARBONDALE (1958-1985)

By

Colin T. White

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the B.S. Honors Diploma

Honors College  
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale  
May 2016

## Introduction

I would love to see the gap between Latinos and Latin Americans at SIU disappear, so we could learn from each other...it would be a very interesting cultural experience.<sup>1</sup>

On November 1, 2006, a young man by the name of Alex Ayala expressed his frustration at the lack of unity between Latin American and Latino students at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. In an article of the University's newspaper, the *Daily Egyptian*, Ayala hoped for the mutual understanding of these two communities in order to learn from each other, as the aforementioned quote reveals. To Ayala, a Colombian citizen, the terms Latino and Latin American were synonymous with one another. However, these two seemingly identical political identities are, in fact, very different. Latinos in the U.S. play an important role as a dominant ethnically and culturally heterogeneous group seeking to reaffirm their identity independently from those in Latin America.<sup>2</sup> This is because groups such as Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans, from the South West, have endured the colonial might of the U.S. Empire as colonized people who did not cross the border, rather the "border crossed them."<sup>3</sup> Latino and Latin American fields of academic inquiry have existed long before the release of the *Daily Egyptian* article in November of 2006. SIU's Latino and Latin American Studies program originated in the 1950s with a novel idea of, Albert Bork, a scholar chosen to head the inaugural program. Dr. Bork sought to create a program that studied not solely the region of Latin America, but the relationship between the U.S. (Latinos/Hispanics) and Latin America as a

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<sup>1</sup> "Latinos reluctant to connect with their roots" article in SIU *Daily Egyptian*, Dr. David Werlich Personal Archives, Chairman of the Latin American Studies Committee, SIU; hereon DWPA.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Susana Rinderle, "The Mexican Diaspora: A Critical Examination of Signifiers," *Journal of Communications Inquiry*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (October 2005), 297. For an in-depth analysis of Latinos and the United States Empire see Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*, revised edition (New York: Penguin Books, 2011).

whole. Bork titled his program 'Inter-American Studies' because it attempted to bridge two distinct groups through language. Although Bork tried to use language as a unifying tool for his program, historically, language alone could not, unite these two different groups.

This essay explores the rise and fall of the Inter-American studies program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. It first reconstructs the history of, both, the Latin American Institute and the academic program in order to highlight the importance of both units in the institutional history of this university. Then, it mainly focuses on the different reasons the academic program of Inter-American studies folded. It argues that lack of university support, coupled with a stringent curriculum, and lack of defined objective for students, contributed to low enrollment. The low numbers, eventually, called the attention of administrators who decided to close the program for good.

In order to construct the origins and timeline of the program, the project utilized SIU's Special Collections Research Center, Board of Trustee minutes, and the personal archives of and interview with Inter-American Studies Chairman Dr. David Werlich. These sources, as a collective, provide an all-inclusive look into the events and daily operations of the program. This comprehensive investigation seeks to discover the source of the program's failure, but also motivations behind its origin, offer insights into the reestablishment of Latino and Latin American Studies at SIU. The arena of Hispanic-American research is a fertile one, which this project seeks to contribute to the field.<sup>4</sup> The past century of American historiography has shifted towards a deeper understanding of the complex relations that link Anglo and Hispanic cultures.<sup>5</sup> This essay first reflects on the work of scholars on the development of Latin American and

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<sup>4</sup> Victoria-María MacDonald. "Hispanic, Latino, Chicano, or "Other"?: Deconstructing the Relationship between Historians and Hispanic-American Educational History." *History of Education Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (2001): 365-413.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Latino Studies as a discipline and scholarly field. Then, it traces the history of the program. Finally, it analyzes the close of the Inter-American studies program.

### **“Inter-American Studies”: A Failed Attempt to Bridge Latin American and Latino Studies**

The Inter-American Studies Program at SIU attempted to bridge two distinctive bodies of academic literature when Dr. Albert Bork first envisioned it. What follows is a short history of these two academic bodies of literature that, still today, continue to grow independently from each other. Unlike other programs founded in the 1950s, SIU’s Inter-American Studies program was an academic experiment challenging that emerging trend. Regardless of its failure, the program’s original idea was innovative.

### **Brief History of Latin American Studies**

In 1918, a group of scholars dedicated to the study of Latin America emerged with the establishment of the *Hispanic American Historical Review*. Since then, the field of Latin American Studies has evolved and adhered to the various theoretical trends and perspectives. These trends and perspectives are, mainly, divided into two temporal bodies of literature separated by the emergence of historical issues related to the Cold War. The historiography of the pre-Cold War era can be understood as a period when United States historians focused on the diplomatic relationships between the U.S. and its southern Latin American neighbors. On the other hand, the historiography of the Cold War years mainly focuses on the rise of Communism, in Latin America, in relation to the U.S. foreign policy of ‘containment’.<sup>6</sup> The increase interest on Latin America, both before and after the Cold War, led to the development of different

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<sup>6</sup> Mark T. Berger, *Under Northern Eyes: Latin American Studies and US Hegemony in the Americas, 1898-1990* (Indiana University Press, 1995), 92.

theories on the relationship between North and South America. These theories included modernization and dependency theories and Pan-Americanism.

Starting around the 1920s, academia saw a rise in the interest of Latin America and its relationship to the United States economically, politically, and culturally. The launch of the *Hispanic American Historical Review (HAHR)*, in 1918, marked the first step toward the creation of a professional field and scholarly production of studies about Latin American.<sup>7</sup> By the 1920s, some of these scholars emerged as diplomatic historians. Many of these diplomatic historians, specifically, focused on the colonial period of Latin America, as well as, the connections with U.S. expansionism into the Spanish borderlands.<sup>8</sup> The *HAHR* played the important role of publishing academic studies, by diplomatic historians, where this focus became a trend. This might be in part because many Latin American historians felt pressure and constraints, imposed in this line of research, by administrations at the university level.<sup>9</sup> This is not surprising given the strong ties between Latin American Studies, the government, academic institutions, and private foundations. This connection supported the desire by many, intellectuals and government officials, to see the Western Hemisphere a unified “Greater America”.<sup>10</sup> Specialists in Latin America saw the future of the region and the U.S. converging in the same direction. This “Greater America” thesis meshed with the Pan-Americanism emphasized similarities between North and South rather than underscoring differences between the histories and cultures of the continent. The theories appeared to work well; however, this worldview misled specialists and

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<sup>7</sup> Berger, *Under Northern Eyes*, 20.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

historians into believing they understood Latin America and thereby guide the region towards their shared future.<sup>11</sup>

Most academic discourses on Latin America, between the 1920s and 1930s, were fruitful, yet lacked institutional and, more importantly, governmental support.<sup>12</sup> The rise of the U.S. dollar diplomacy, in the form of “Good Neighbor Policy” further supported the idea that the U.S. and Latin America shared a unified history. Scholars and the U.S. government characterized Latin America as “stable”; the region posed no longer threat to the U.S. interest. Stable is a slippery term here because, in this context, it fails to account for the role of the U.S. government’s historical intervention into Latin American’s affairs. It is widely known that the U.S. government aided to established dictators favorable to U.S. economic and political interests, particularly in regards to United States companies in Latin America.<sup>13</sup> The contradiction between U.S. intervention and U.S. “Good Neighbor” policy propelled new theoretical tools, especially as the U.S. entered the Second World War changing U.S.–Latin American relations.

World War II and the 1940s spurred a period of steady development, growth, and diversification of area studies.<sup>14</sup> With U.S. national security focus on Europe and Asia, Latin American Studies received less attention and significantly lower funding than European, Asian area studies.<sup>15</sup> However, in the aftermath of WWII, Latin American specialists became very academically important because Cold War had spread to the region. The end of WWII and the beginning of the Cold War forged an increase in area-studies programs in the U.S. Prior to 1950s, only 29 programs existed. By the early 1960s, there were over 100 language and area

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 72.

studies programs on U.S. campuses.<sup>16</sup> A significant portion of the funding, for the programs, stemmed from private institutions such as the Rockefeller foundation. Private funding was not the only source of income for these programs. The U.S. government appropriated substantial funding for area studies programs in Latin America.<sup>17</sup> The National Defense Education Act of 1958 provided funding for educational institutions at all levels. It specifically addressed improved technology and equipment for school instruction in the areas of mathematics, science, and foreign languages. More importantly, it explicitly developed 53 language and area centers, at colleges and universities, for the full-time study of various languages and the countries.<sup>18</sup> Section VI specifically “financed the acquisition of special foreign collections and materials for major private libraries.”<sup>19</sup> This is one of the first instances where the U.S. government directly got involved with the expansion and funding of area studies programs. These federal monies were crucial to the maintenance and expansion of area studies since, by the 1960s, Latin American Studies had become institutionalized at various universities nationwide.<sup>20</sup>

In the 1960s, the number of courses, on Latin America, offered had doubled and foundations such as the Ford’s International Training and Research footed the bill for programs across the country. Private funding continued to play a critical role in the expansion of area studies programs. One event that prioritized, even further, Latin American studies was the Cuban revolution. Because of the Cuban revolution, the study of communism became an integral part in the study of Latin America, hence creating a new set of scholarship.<sup>21</sup> However, by the end of the 1960s, expansion and funding for area studies notably tapered off. For example, the Ford

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 74

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>18</sup> Developments under the National Defense Education Act, Box 11, Office of Sponsored Projects Administration: Director’s Office, Special Collections Research Center, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

<sup>19</sup> Frank Bonilla, *Borderless borders: US Latinos, Latin Americans, and the paradox of interdependence* (Temple University Press, 2010), 200.

<sup>20</sup> Berger, *Under Northern Eyes*, 86-87.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 92.



Foundation ended its international training and research program.<sup>22</sup> The loss of private funding was serious problem for Latin American studies because now colleges and universities were responsible for independently funding these area studies. In all, area studies programs continued to exist as academic units, yet these programs have, and continue to be, at the mercy of university administrators who can suspend these programs during a difficult budget crisis.

### **Brief History of Latino Studies**

Social and cultural movements, over the past several decades, led to the emergence, dissolution, and revival of Latino Studies programs at major universities in the United States.<sup>23</sup> Starting in the 1950s and 1960s, American universities established ethnic or cultural studies programs.<sup>24</sup> The origins of these programs raised questions in the historian's eyes about the motives and rationale behind them. One such belief was that affirmative action drove the incorporation of such ethnic studies into collegiate academic programs.<sup>25</sup> Another hypothesis was that the nation's youth, specifically Latinos/Hispanics, developed cultural identities that, then, transferred to college campuses. The founding of these programs in the 50s and 60s informs historians, today, of the resurgence of Latino studies programs in the U.S. Today, the increasing number of Latino/Hispanic population can be seen as one of the leading forces behind the founding or expansion of this program.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>23</sup> For a detailed historiographical essay on the rise and history of Latino studies program, see Victoria-Maria McDonald, "Hispanic, Latino, Chicano, or "Other"? Deconstructing the Relationship Between Historians and Hispanic-American Educational History," *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Fall 2001):365-413.

<sup>24</sup> Berger, *Under Northern Eyes*, 86-87.

<sup>25</sup> Melissa Campbell, "New Trends in Latino Studies," *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, Vol. 15, No. 7 (Dec 27, 2004), 29.

<sup>26</sup> Juan Flores, "Latino Studies: New contexts, New Concepts," *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 67, No. 2 (1997): 208-222.

Scholars, today, share similar views as to why Latino Studies (Chicano or Puerto Rican studies) or, in some cases, Inter-American studies<sup>27</sup>, originated. These views encompass multiple reasons for the establishment of the programs. Multiple scholars including Marilyn Gilroy and Melissa Campbell point to affirmative action as the spark for Latino Studies programs.<sup>28</sup> In addition, Campbell sees the ethnic studies programs as byproducts of the civil rights movement.<sup>29</sup> Juan Flores also has pointed to this moment in time that revolved around change and revolution in his article “Latino Studies: New Contexts, New Concepts”.<sup>30</sup> He saw the rise of Latino studies aligned with the Civil Rights movement as a way to challenge that period’s persistent oppression against racial and ethnic minorities at the global, national, and local level.<sup>31</sup>

Nationally, the implementation of Affirmative Action had positive outcomes; however, Affirmative Action carried with it unintended adverse effects. Anne-Marie Nunez worried, though, that policies such as Affirmative Action send negative messages to students. She reasoned that some students might perceive that their enrollment at an institution of higher education was because of their race or ethnicity rather than their qualifications.<sup>32</sup>

Suzanne Oboler has noted that Latino studies is not a new field as some might think. She points out that name of the field has changed to encompasses, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Hispanic studies. This coincides with the rise in ethnic group consciousness that transpired over recent decades.<sup>33</sup> Juan Flores adds that ideas of national and cultural identity are prevalent more so

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<sup>27</sup> This was the name given to the Latin American and Latino studies program at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, as early as 1958.

<sup>28</sup> Marilyn Gilroy, "Latino Studies Programs Gaining in Popularity," *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, Vol. 24, No. 11 (Mar 10, 2014): 10-11.; Campbell, "New Trends in Latino Studies," 29.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Campbell.

<sup>30</sup> Flores, "Latino Studies: New Contexts," 208-222.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Anne-Marie Nuñez, "Latino students' transitions to college: A social and intercultural capital perspective," *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (2009), 22-48.

<sup>33</sup> Suzanne Oboler, "An Open Letter to University Presidents: The Necessity for Latino Studies," *Latino Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (11, 2003), 361-365.

today. Rather than to point to the motivations of past radical changes, he argued that globalization and greater cultural awareness of the Latino presence on college campuses as a main contributor to the increase number of Latino studies programs.<sup>34</sup> Through the lenses of globalization, scholars such as Juan Flores, have examined the transnational characteristics of Latino identities to explain how history and the effects of globalization affected construction of such identities.<sup>35</sup> Group identity has played off the group's position in the globalized market.<sup>36</sup> The fate of immigrants in the U.S. has been largely determined by modes of assimilation employed in conjunction with how an individual identifies him or herself. One example, as provided by Patricia Fernandez-Kelly, is Mexican and Mexican American communities. They have had the longest lasting migration into the U.S. and those successful have shed self-definition based on ethnicity while prosperity remained elusive for those with emergent ethnic identities.<sup>37</sup> A term of self-identification today is "Latino" and with it comes a complex network of social and cultural influences.

Yet, the term "Latino" has been utilized from an essentialist standpoint because it rejects the government's imposition of categorical terms of Hispanic and Hispanic American. The Latin American community identifies with this term because it adopted the cultural traditions, historical experiences, and social interactions of their countries of origins. The term is unique because it rejects racialized categories of peoples in Latin America and unites individuals of different national origins. However, the term disappears once individuals are within their own, specific Latin American groups such as Puerto Ricans, Nicaraguans, and Mexicans.<sup>38</sup> Other impacts globalization continues to reinforce is the subordinate position of Latinos and Latin

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<sup>34</sup> Flores, "Latino Studies: New Contexts," 208-222.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>36</sup> Bonilla, *Borderless Borders*, 85.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

Americans included the 1990 Trilateral Commission Report, which implicitly warned of the existence of an alien nation within U.S. borders. The report, in short, stated that Latinos, despite citizenship, and are not “authentic Americans”.<sup>39</sup> With immigrant workers entering the country, nearly every day, working-class Americans feared that their jobs were threaten by “virtual slave labor of Mexicans and Central Americans.”<sup>40</sup>

Gilroy, Campbell, and Oboler agreed that the increased number of Latinos/Hispanics from various areas of the continent, who had made the United States their home, supported the generalization of ethnic specific programs such as Chicano studies, into an all-encompassing Latino Studies. In turn, the increased diversity of Hispanic/Latino students is evidence of Latino study incorporation into collegiate academic programs. Pedro Caban further supports this view with recognition of university administrators accepting these programs as credible.<sup>41</sup> Flores and Oboler, however, disagree with Caban’s view. Both scholars underline the fact that despite significant growth of Latino populations in the U.S., there is a lack of distinguishable curriculum changes yet to occur. The lack of university commitment to the staffing of Latino Studies programs compromises the programs foundation.<sup>42</sup> This concern mirrors those about area studies programs, such as Latin American studies.

The Latino population is the largest minority group within the U.S. The importance and significance of this community is certainly one factor that led to the reemergence of Latino Studies programs. The same case occurred, too, in the late 1950s and the 1960s as the Latino or Hispanic populations within the United States grew.<sup>43</sup> Interestingly enough, Illinois at the time

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 198.

<sup>41</sup> Pedro A. Cabán, "From Challenge to Absorption: The Changing Face of Latina and Latino Studies." *Centro Journal* Vol. 15, No. 2 (2003).

<sup>42</sup> Campbell, "New Trends in Latino Studies," 29.

<sup>43</sup> Cabán, "From Challenge to Absorption," 126-145.

held the second largest population of Latinos east of the Mississippi, second only to New York.<sup>44</sup> The rise in the consciousness of a growing demographic prompted the need for universities to establish Latino Studies programs that coincided with the transformed diversity of campuses. However, the academic credibility of ethnic studies programs faced pushback from administrators.<sup>45</sup>

Locally, in Carbondale, especially at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Muriel N. Canfield investigated the origins of the Inter-American studies program at SIU.<sup>46</sup> The Inter-American studies program, at SIU, mirrored other Latin American studies programs across the country. The one noticeable difference was its attempt to bridge the field of Latin American and Latino studies programs. While this was a noble idea, as it has been pointed out, these programs emerged under different circumstances, politically and socially. However, Canfield's work presents little analysis or a substantial explanation to account for the closing of the Latin American Institute and, eventually, the academic program. As aforementioned, the lack of financial support for Latin American studies programs, especially in the 1970s, made it difficult for any area or ethnic studies program to survive as academic units. In all, the Inter-American studies program, at SIU, failed to bridge the two fields.

### **A Brief History of the Inter-American Studies and Institute for Latin American Studies**

In 1956, Southern Illinois University<sup>47</sup> began a motion to launch the Inter-American Studies degree program through its newly established Latin American Institute. The committee

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<sup>44</sup> Latino Studies Program Proposal, Box 11, Latin American Institute Records, Special Collections Research Center, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University Carbondale; hereon LAIRSCRC SIU.

<sup>45</sup> Cabán, "From Challenge to Absorption," 126-145.

<sup>46</sup> Muriel N. Canfield, "The Latin American Institute at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1958-1973 (PhD diss., Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, 1984).

<sup>47</sup> Southern Illinois University hereafter referred as SIU

that founded the Latin American Institute was charged with the implementation and execution of the Inter-American Studies degree.<sup>48</sup> Formally established on July 1, 1957, the Institute served as an overseeing organization for Inter-American Studies program. Former SIU President Delyte Morris explained the mission of the institute to the SIU Board of Trustees:

The purpose of the institute...would be to provide a co-ordinated program of Latin American Studies at [SIU], encourage the exchange of students between the United States and Latin America...to offer courses in Latin American subjects through various instructional departments, and to provide a field major. The institute would also engage in research...sponsor and direct conferences and special programs promoting a better understanding and appreciation of Latin America.<sup>49</sup>

This proposal to the Board of Trustees highlighted the objectives and goals identified in the preliminary work conducted by the Inter-American Studies committee. It, also, identified the methods the University should follow to develop a successful Inter-American Studies program.<sup>50</sup> Success, in this context, meant to graduate students trained to navigate the complexities of both Anglo and Latin American cultures in their daily lives as well as their professional work. On the other hand, from the university administrative standpoint success meant, simultaneously, a nationally recognized Inter-American Studies program. To achieve these goals, the university secured a leader for both the program and institute.

To achieve national recognition, SIU interviewed highly qualified individuals for the director position to run the institute and to develop its Inter-American Studies program. SIU faced a major problem as candidates declined offers for the directorship. Harvey Gardiner, a committee member involved in the establishment of the Latin American Institute and Inter-American Studies program, wrote a memo to President Delyte Morris making him aware that

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<sup>48</sup> Preliminary Work-Sheets Institute of Latin American Studies, LAIRSCRCSIU, Box 2, June 1, 1956. Program will be used as reference and in place of "Inter-American Studies"

<sup>49</sup> "Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University" (Annual Report of the Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University, 1960-1961), 90.

<sup>50</sup> Preliminary Work-Sheets, LAIRSCRCSIU, Box 2, June 1, 1956

candidates declined the directorship.<sup>51</sup> According to Gardiner, these candidates rejected the offer because, in their view, the institute “lacked clarity of concept”.<sup>52</sup> At the end of the hiring process, the committee selected Albert. W. Bork, a Latin Americanist, to direct the institute and head the program.<sup>53</sup>

Albert Bork spent much of his childhood and adolescence years in the Southwest United States. His coming of age in that region had a profound influence on Bork’s educational philosophy and his vision for the Inter-American studies program. Bork was born and raised in Tuscan, Arizona, a region of the country with a significant population of Hispanic/Latino Americans. He attended and graduated from the University of Arizona with a degree in Spanish. He went on to and furthered his education to receive a Masters Degree in Spanish Literature and, later, a doctorate in Historical Studies.<sup>54</sup> In the Southwest, he observed how negative attitudes and stereotypes assigned to Hispanic/Latino populations had an adverse effect on the ability of Hispanic/Latino students to learn and to succeed in school. He made a conscious effort to change this.

In his professional career, Bork worked for many years in the Southwest. He eventually moved to Mexico to teach at the post-secondary level. The professional network he fostered during his tenure in Mexico eventually helped him to become Dean of Undergraduates at Mexico City College.<sup>55</sup> Bork left his college post, after three years, and accepted a job in Mexico's General Electric’s professional development sector. In this role, he developed a program to

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<sup>51</sup> Letter from Harvey Gardiner to President Morris on Concept of Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, October 31, 1957.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. "lacked clarity of concept" meant that the goals and objectives created by the university were broad and vague. This is surprising given that at Arizona State University, Michigan State University, Indiana University, and University of Texas already had preexisting, successful programs which SIU's committee could have benefitted from understanding goals and objectives of those programs. SIU was aware of these programs, see Guide to Latin-American Studies, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, February 4, 1961.

<sup>53</sup> Announcement of Establishment of the Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, n.d.

<sup>54</sup> Biographical Data on Albert William Bork, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 1, November 15, 1957.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

advance the training and education of Mexican employees.<sup>56</sup> His diverse interests in public and private education eventually led him to submit his candidacy for SIU's Latin American Institute directorship. In February 1958, Albert Bork assumed directorship of the Latin American Institute.<sup>57</sup>

During the 1959-1960 school year, the Inter-American Studies program was officially inaugurated. From the start, the year proved to be one of enthusiasm and great achievement. Bork and the, then, assistant director of the institute, Basil C. Hedrick, worked to establish and conducted research projects abroad such as the Mesoamerican research study in Northern Mexico, archival research projects at Mexican Universities, and collaborations with many other Latin American Universities.<sup>58</sup> These international connections served two crucial goals. First, they served to establish institutional research relationships. Secondly, create opportunities for students to learn academically and culturally in an intercultural setting. These cultural exchanges assisted Bork to fulfill the goals and objectives set out by SIU: distinction in area studies, both as a program and institution.

As part of the mission of Latin American Institute, there was a need for the development of a strong research library. The acquisition and cataloging of library materials pertaining to Latin America received a great deal of attention from both Bork and Morris.<sup>59</sup> A library with suitable materials related to Latin American allowed students and faculty, alike, to conduct proper academic research at SIU.<sup>60</sup> Bork and Hedrick attended local and national conferences where they listened to and presented on the importance of the "Acquisition of Library Materials"

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<sup>56</sup> Biographical Data on Albert William Bork, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 1, November 15, 1957

<sup>57</sup> Announcement of Establishment of the Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2,

<sup>58</sup> Annual Report of the Latin American Institute School Year 1959-1960, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1960.

<sup>59</sup> Dr. David Werlich, interviewed by the Author, April 13, 2016.

<sup>60</sup> Annual Report of the Latin American Institute School Year 1958-1959, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1959.



for area studies programs.<sup>61</sup> The institute made several purchases of materials ranging from private collections to libraries in Latin America to include in the collection at SIU. Bork and Hedrick worked in conjunction with the university administration and the Library of Congress to sponsor a bibliography of materials on Latin America to streamline the research process for SIU faculty and students.<sup>62</sup> All of these activities supported the mission of the Institute and furthered SIU's agenda for national recognition.

In December of 1960, the institute announced the offering of a master's degree in Inter-American Studies through the Latin American Institute. President Morris presented the matter to the Board of Trustees and the board approved of the motion.<sup>63</sup> The approval of the Inter-American Studies master's degree program supported the potential for longevity and academic legitimacy of Inter-American Studies at SIU along with other projects developed by the institute. For example, the university played host to multiple conferences on Inter-American area studies. During these conferences, SIU hosted directors from area studies centers and programs, related to Latin America at different universities and colleges, to further intra-collegial relationships at the institutional level.<sup>64</sup> Among the topics covered at the conferences, there was a continued focus and emphasis on library material acquisitions.<sup>65</sup> In all, these conferences were an important instrument used by the Latin American Institute to promote its 'distinguished' position within the field of Latin American Studies.

To sustain, both, the Inter-American Studies program and Latin American Institute, over the years, continued efforts sought to increase enrollment, acquire foreign materials, host

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<sup>61</sup> Annual Report of the Latin American Institute School Year 1959-1960, LAIRSCRCSIU, Box 11, 1960.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Howard F. Cline, Director of the Library of Congress Hispanic Foundation to Dr. Hedrick, Assistant director of the Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRCSIU, Box 4, February 1, 1960.

<sup>63</sup> BOT Minutes SIU, 1960-1961, 65.

<sup>64</sup> Conference on Area Studies Centers and Their Programs, Box 11, Special Collections Research Center, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University Carbondale; hereon SPRCMLSIUC.

<sup>65</sup> Annual Report of the Latin American Institute School Year 1960-1961, SPRCMLSIUC, Box 11, 1961.

conferences, and to seek out outside funding sources. Bork conducted orientations on ways to apply for and obtain federal grants for the Inter-American Studies program.<sup>66</sup> In a 1968 report titled "The Latin American Institute", the Institute presented its activities and achievements since its inception in 1957-58 to university officials. It included the origins of the institute, leaders of the institute such as Bork and Hedrick, sources of funding and growth, and contributions made to the University by the institute and its members. The report positively positioned the institute and program as successfully achieving their goals.<sup>67</sup> As a result, the institute expanded its mission and tasks by founding a scholarly journal titled *Specialia*, attending more area studies conferences, curricular improvement, and enhanced international connections to produce the most qualified Inter-American Studies graduates.<sup>68</sup>

Contrary, though, to the 1968 report, there were serious problems with the Inter-American Studies program. William Simeone, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research encouraged and recommended the abolition of the Inter American Studies degrees, at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Simeone cited "lack of interest [among students] for Foreign Language at SIU" as supportive evidence to the Inter-American Studies Committee for the elimination of the institute and Inter-American Studies degrees.<sup>69</sup> Out of a student body population of 20,000, the Foreign Language department only graduated four or five of its own students. Second, the curricular similarity between Inter-American Studies requirements and those of the Geography program presented another concern.<sup>70</sup> If Geography courses available on

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<sup>66</sup> Suggested Orientation for Meeting on a Federal Grant for Inter-American Studies, SPRCMLSIUC, Box 2, January 19, 1966.

<sup>67</sup> The Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 1, DATE.

<sup>68</sup> Issues of the periodical *Specialia* are hosted at SIUC.

<sup>69</sup> Inter American Studies Committee correspondence between Simeone and Bork, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11. n.d.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

Latin America mimicked those offered by the Institute in Inter-American Studies, then there was no reason to have two identical programs, this was a misuse of university funds.

On August 10, 1973, President David Derge and Vice-President/Provost Keith Leasure ordered to the Board of Trustees the closing of the Latin American Institute as an administrative unit. The shutdown of the Institute as an administrative unit, however, had no direct effect on the availability of the Inter-American Studies degrees at the undergraduate and graduate level.<sup>71</sup> At the time the Institute closed, total enrollment numbers in the program had more than doubled since the 1960-61 school year but only to a meager 13 students.<sup>72</sup> As a result of the low numbers of enrollment, on September 1, 1973, the SIU Board of Trustees officially eliminated the Latin American Institute. Regardless of any other activities conducted by the Institute, successful or not, it was the failure of the program that marked its demise. Interestingly, SIU chose to continue to offer the Inter-American Studies degrees.

In 1975, the Latin American Studies degrees became, officially, the responsibility of the College of Liberal Arts. Under the College, the program functioned under the supervision of a newly formed committee. The committee included professors from across five disciplines to reflect the inter-disciplinary nature of Latin American Studies programs. The Latin American Studies committee re-evaluated the program by highlighting long tradition of the program at SIU, the wealth of resources at SIU specific to the region, the connections between Latin America, the U.S. (more specifically Illinois) and most importantly the flaws of the former program of study to justify the continuity of the programs.<sup>73</sup> Dr. David Werlich, chairman of the

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<sup>71</sup> "Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University" (Annual Report of the Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University, 1973-1974), 237.

<sup>72</sup> List of Students in Latin American Studies, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, 1973.

<sup>73</sup> Rationale for a Latin American Studies Program at SIU, DWPA, 1974.

committee, understood the peculiar nature of the multi-disciplinary approach to Latin American studies, and the opportunity in front of SIU to achieve national distinction in the field.

Over the next several years, the committee ran the program without much pressure to justify its mission nor to validate its existence as a university program. In time, however, such pressure once again arose. In 1982, the University established a Committee on Academic Progress (CAP).<sup>74</sup> CAP members developed assessment guidelines for how the university allocated its resources during, both, “normal times” and “periods of emergency”.<sup>75</sup> These assessments placed academic programs into four categories: enhancement, maintenance, reduction, or elimination. Ultimately, CAP required that academic programs and units collect data to show the 'effectiveness' of each academic program in relation to the University's mission, "geographic advantage", and "comparative advantage".<sup>76</sup> For the Latin American Studies program, this meant to re-evaluate its mission, benefits, and success, though quantitative means, rather than qualitative ones.

In May of 1982, members of the International Area Studies committee submitted a report to Vice-President John Guyon concerning the Latin American Studies program, which satisfied the requirements of CAP.<sup>77</sup> This report, again, summarized the history of the program, its struggles, success, and what it had contributed to the university. The authors acknowledged past difficulties with recruitment but excelled in other areas such as the library and service and exchange programs with other universities. Modifications to the curriculum of the program consisted of course requirements, additions of minors or certificates in Caribbean Studies, and an

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<sup>74</sup> VP of Academic Affairs to Dr. Werlich about Committee on Academic Priorities July 30,1982, DWPA, July 30,1982.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Report of the International Area Studies Committee Concerning the Latin American Studies Program at SIUC, DWPA, May 10, 1982.

entry-level inter-disciplinary course, aimed to uplift the program. Along with modifications to the program, the committee recognized the program needed an actual budget, more administrative support, and scheduling courses that did not conflict with one another or with equivalent offerings.<sup>78</sup> One fact stood out in the report that influenced the view of the Vice-President on the state of the program, only three students: one undergraduate and two master's students.<sup>79</sup> The lack of students in the program coupled with increasing budgetary cuts to SIU influenced Guyon's decision to shut down the program. In June of 1984, the Board of Trustees signed off on the discontinuation of the program and thus marked the end of the Inter-American Studies program at Southern Illinois University.<sup>80</sup>

The history of the Latin American Institute and Inter-American Studies Program at Southern Illinois University is a short yet complicated one. Multiple individuals within and outside of the university applauded and approved of the inauguration of Latin America area studies. The Inter-American Studies program initially fell under a dedicated director Albert Bork. Over the years, under the Latin American Institute, the program continued to develop and evolve but did not reach expected success. The program never accomplished distinguished placement at the national level amongst other universities in the same field. Thus, the program achieved early glimpses of success, success alone did not sustain the Inter-American Studies program and it eventually shut down.

### **The Inter-American Studies Program and its Curricular Achilles Heel**

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> "Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University" (Annual Report of the Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University, 1983-1985), 380-381.

In 1946, Albert Bork published an article in the *Arizona Quarterly* titled “El Dia de la Raza,” (The Day of the Race).<sup>81</sup> Bork understood that throughout the American Southwest because of the bias of the, then, educational system, coupled with United States attitudes toward Latinos, and the lack of recognition of the merits of that community as integral part of US society, that Latino and Hispanic-Americans often felt ashamed of their race. He reasoned that it was the segregation and simultaneous “Americanization” of the “Indo-Hispanic” children in US schools that drove the Spanish language, traditions, and, overall culture, of this community to full eradication from US society; “We have sought unity, and encouraged disunity.”<sup>82</sup>

To remedy this cultural genocide, Bork sought to develop an academic program that could bridge Latinos and Hispanic-Americans and their US counter parts. He developed a three-step program to achieve his goal of an effective area studies program.<sup>83</sup> The first of the three steps sought to celebrate the heritage of racial pride of the “Indo-Hispanic” citizens of the Southwest. Bork knew that to achieve this goal, the program needed to teach a revised “Indo-Hispanic” history.<sup>84</sup> Children at an early point in their education must study this revised history. Lastly, there needed to be an emphasis on language; Bork viewed language as a mutual bond between Latinos and Latin Americans to be of great importance. The combination of language and revised history functioned to prevent the loss of young minds to harmful ideas of prejudice and inferiority.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> According to José M. Salazar and Miguel A. Salazar the term “the Day of the Race” refers to the celebration of a new mixed race (European and indigenous) in the Americas upon the arrival of Christopher Columbus, see José M. Salazar and Miguel A. Salazar, “Permanence and Modifications in National Identities,” in John G. Adair et al., eds., *Advances in Psychological Sciences: Volume 1: Social, Personal and Cultural Aspects* (Montreal, Canada: Psychology Press Taylor & Francis Group, 1996) 255. For the cited work of Albert Bork, see Proposal for an American Studies and Latin American Studies Program at the Undergraduate Level, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box3, 1946.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* Proposal for an American Studies and Latin American Studies Program at the Undergraduate Level, LAIRSCRC, Box3, 1946.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

Bork presented this idea and framework for an area studies programs that eventually led to the Inter-American Studies degree at SIU. The history of the Inter-American Studies program at SIU is one of optimism but complex beginnings.<sup>86</sup> At a time when the nation's colleges and universities saw an increase in inaugural area studies programs, SIU took part and devised its own area studies programs. Despite the enthusiasm that surrounded the start of the Inter-American Studies program, the university's goals for the program lacked a clear vision before the concept presented by Albert Bork.<sup>87</sup> The narrow avenues used to execute these goals steered the Inter-Studies program and overseeing organization, the Latin American Institute, towards struggles to maintain longevity, student enrollment, and an eventual shutdown of the Latin American Institute and Inter-American Studies undergraduate and graduate degrees. The program's historical development centers on disordered and a lack of full dedication of the University to ensure a culture that fostered success and permanence.

### **Curricular Problems**

In the mid-twentieth century, colleges and universities saw an increased emphasis placed on ethnic and area studies programs; SIU was no exception.<sup>88</sup> For an educational program to achieve success and sustainability, it must have a strong curriculum foundation. Strong in the sense that the curriculum must consider student needs and interests.<sup>89</sup> The curriculum of the

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<sup>88</sup> "Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University" (Annual Report of the Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University, 1956-1957), 90.

<sup>89</sup> Jeroen Bron and Wiel Veugelers, "Chapter 7: Why We need to Involve Our Students in Curriculum Design: Five Arguments for Student Voice," *Curriculum & Teaching Dialogue* Vol. 16, No. 1/2 (September 2014): 125-140. *Professional Development Collection*.

Suzanne E. Wade, "Research on Importance and Interest: Implications for Curriculum Development and Future Research," *Educational Psychology Review* Vol. 13, No. 3 (2001): 243-261. Bron writes on the necessity for educational programs to include the voices of students on what should be included in the curriculum. Wade writes about her research regarding the importance on student interest in presenting material and content.

Inter-American Studies program at SIU emphasized language fluency and the study of Latin American History. The particular focus of this curriculum stemmed from, the then, influences of U.S. foreign policy and the directives of the Institute director Dr. Albert Bork. The program changed and developed over time. In the end, the program dissolved, partially, due to its dependency on language credit hours and low enrollment. Other forces such as the institute's location, SIU administrative support, and advisement aligned in a way that prevented the Inter-American Studies program from fulfilling its goals. This section seeks to analyze and comprehend why the Inter-American Studies program shutdown.

Since its inauguration, the Inter-American Studies program focused on the combination of bilingualism, the history of the Spanish American region, and people of Hispanic/Latino origin. The educational philosophy of Albert Bork placed the success of students in the real world on his or her ability to be bilingual.<sup>90</sup> His firsthand experiences growing up in the Southwest, among Hispanic/Latino populations, and his life in Mexico, partially influenced this philosophy. As director of the institute, Bork implemented a curriculum that reflected major points made in his proposal for a Latino Studies Program at SIU. He centered the development of Inter-American Studies on two pillars: language acquisition and history of Latin America.<sup>91</sup> Under Dr. Bork's proposal, language acquisition became a critical component of the curriculum. Bork executed his educational philosophy, as reflected in the Inter-American Studies curriculum, through the high demand of Spanish credit hours, 30 to 36, required of a student to graduate.<sup>92</sup> The credit hours spread across courses with an emphasis on composition, literary works, and

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<sup>90</sup> Proposal for an American Studies and Latin American Studies Program at the Undergraduate Level, LAIRSCRC, Box3, 1946.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Pamphlet for Inter-American Studies offered by the Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1961.



verbal communication.<sup>93</sup> A heavily language focused vision for the set the groundwork for the program. The institute also required students to learn Portuguese if not already mastered.<sup>94</sup> Bork believed that language tied together the study of Latin American history and redemption of racial pride to “Indo-Hispanic” citizens and students. Within his program, Bork had to integrate activities and projects that met the goals and main objective prescribed by SIU. To do so, he included international projects and research opportunities abroad for himself and students along with conferences specifically on Inter-American Studies. All of these programs were put in place in an attempt to create national recognition for SIU. In addition, Bork enhanced language fluency among his students through two different methods. First, the program targeted students with bilingual and cultural backgrounds. Second, if student was not already bilingual, the program sought to provide a thorough adult study and cultural emersion to language acquisition.<sup>95</sup> Bork engaged both methods for the Inter-American Studies program at SIU. He envisioned the recruitment of bilingual students to implement his rigorous language focused curriculum.

In 1959, SIU through its Latin American Institute inaugurated the Inter-American Studies program. Members of a university formed committee on Latin American Studies conducted preliminary work, created objectives and goals for the program, and tasked to find a director but struggled to do both.<sup>96</sup> The committee developed this program by emphasizing the study of Mexico and Central America without fully excluding other regions of Latin America. The committee required the institute to conduct research projects and study tours abroad. SIU eventually hired Albert Bork to direct the Latin American Institute and lead the Inter-American Studies Program. SIU saw Bork as an individual with a strong educational philosophy and

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Latin American Institute Exposition, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 1, 1964.

<sup>95</sup> Proposal for an American Studies and Latin American Studies Program at the Undergraduate Level, LAIRSCRC, Box3, 1946.

<sup>96</sup> Preliminary Work-Sheets, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, June 1, 1956.

experienced background on how to implement and execute an Inter-American Studies Program.<sup>97</sup> Dr. Bork's scholarly work on Central and South America and his international professional development made him a well-rounded director.<sup>98</sup> Bork's area of expertise and experiences based on the Southwest United States and Central and South America, however, raised concerns on their transferability to a university and students in the Midwest. Bork's experiences and vision for an Inter-American Studies program led him to write the article used for his proposal of such area studies at the undergraduate level at Southern Illinois University.<sup>99</sup>

Bork's proposal for the undergraduate major outlined a threefold-program in order for the program and students to succeed in the field of area studies.<sup>100</sup> The three-fold program faithfully follows the curriculum as outlined in the Latin American Institute catalog for the 1958-1959 school year.<sup>101</sup> The three steps Bork advocated in his study included the redemption of heritage and racial pride for Hispanic citizens, the early study of Latin American history, and the mutual bond of Spanish language.<sup>102</sup> The curriculum for the program centered on Language and History with the incorporation of other disciplines such as anthropology, government, geography, and economics.<sup>103</sup> Bork, in conjunction with SIU, designed the Inter-American Studies curriculum to meet the growth of interest in this field of area studies.

Though SIU recognized growing interest for Latin American Studies in academia, the program did not receive much interest from SIU students.<sup>104</sup> Even with the expansion of the

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<sup>97</sup> Proposal for an American Studies and Latin American Studies Program at the Undergraduate Level, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 3, 1946.

<sup>98</sup> Biographical Data on Albert William Bork, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 1, November 15, 1957

<sup>99</sup> Proposal for an American Studies and Latin American Studies Program at the Undergraduate Level, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box3, 1946.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Latin American Studies Major Pamphlet, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1959.

<sup>102</sup> Proposal for an American Studies and Latin American Studies Program at the Undergraduate Level, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box3, 1946.

<sup>103</sup> Latin American Studies Major Pamphlet, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1958.

<sup>104</sup> Low enrollment numbers within the program supported this lack of interest.

program leading to a Master of Arts degree, students enrolled in Latin American Studies rarely exceeded 15 individuals.<sup>105</sup> One explanation for low enrollment points to the curriculum as part of the problem. The curriculum implemented by Bork overly focused on Language and History classes. It, also, incorporated other interdepartmental courses, study tours, and student exchanges with minimal emphasis. From an educational perspective and through the lens of educational philosopher John Dewey, the study tours offer international exposure and experiences that are more valuable to the student than learning about the world in a classroom.<sup>106</sup> How can a student be expected to be successful in the world when the student has not experienced it concurrently with his or her studies? Despite advantages such as an international study program – experience making a student competitive and successful in the international market – glimpse at the curriculum catalog does appear daunting even for the most determined students to undertake.<sup>107</sup>

The Latin American Studies program took an important step with the added track to a Master of Arts degree.<sup>108</sup> The addition of the Masters degree aided the program in establishing itself as a serious academic discipline. The degree further extended the number of credit hours from the undergraduate degree to over 250 credit hours of course work to achieve distinction in the area of Latin America.<sup>109</sup> Students wishing to pursue the Master's degree needed to command, both, Spanish and Portuguese languages as outlined by the course catalog.<sup>110</sup> Command of language was an understandable and a necessary requirement for students seeking employment in the areas and positions of international business, diplomacy, and bilingual

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<sup>105</sup> List of Students in Latin American Studies, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, 1973

<sup>106</sup> Neil Hopkins. "The Democratic Curriculum: Concept and Practice." *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 48, no. 3 (2014): 416-427.

<sup>107</sup> Pamphlet for Inter-American Studies offered by the Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1962

<sup>108</sup> BOT Minutes SIU, 1960-1961, 65.

<sup>109</sup> Pamphlet for Inter-American Studies offered by the Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1962

<sup>110</sup> Dr. David Werlich, interviewed by Author, April 13, 2016.

secretary as stated by the program catalog.<sup>111</sup> In 1961, the program refined its focus by concentrating on the needs of future employers of SIU students. In line with other academic programs such as universities in New York, SIU implemented curriculum geared towards training students in three main zones of Inter-American employment.<sup>112</sup> The goals of the Inter-American Studies program were to develop capable graduates to actively participate in Inter-American relations whether it be in business, education, or secretarial.<sup>113</sup> Even with extensive academic opportunities to train students for Inter-American affairs, students did not enroll in the program. Although language fluency was a vital requirement of the Inter-American Studies degree, it was also a major reason for the degree's lack of student enrollment.

William Simeone, Dean of the SIU School of Graduate Studies and Research, provided Alber Bork with a report on the state of Inter-American Studies at SIU.<sup>114</sup> The report summarized the curriculum and enrollment figures of the program and recommended changes needed for its continuance.<sup>115</sup> Simeone agreed that language fluency was important but believed the program had too strong of a dependency on language credit hours. In addition, the report underscores SIU's small number of students enrolled to study language as a major. Four or five students yearly, out of a student body of 20,000, graduated with a major in any foreign language, let alone Spanish. Simeone wrote overhauls of Spanish language literature, recruitment, and an added Ph.D. must occur if the program is to thrive.<sup>116</sup> In all, he explained that, despite its progress, in the eyes of many, Inter-American Studies remained unable to claim a distinguished

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<sup>111</sup> Pamphlet for Inter-American Studies offered by the Latin American Institute, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1962

<sup>112</sup> Latin American Institute Co-Educational Training for World Wide Careers Catalogue 1961-1962, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1961.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Inter American Studies Committee correspondence between Simeone and Bork, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

position as one of the “top 25% programs” because the program had not been recognized as such by the NDEA (National Defense Education Act).<sup>117</sup>

Even with the Inter-American Studies program requirement of language, the curriculum alone did not account solely for lack of student enrollment and the ultimate discontinuation of the program. Three major factors contributed to the decline and eventual eradication of the Inter-American Studies Program. These factors appear in correspondences between Bork and Davis to Vice-President, Chancellor Robert MacVicar on the location of the Institute and SIU’s level of involvement in hiring adequate Latin American specialists. The third factor as noted by Bork points to the advisement center and their discouragement of student exploring the Inter-American Studies degree. In a letter dated February of 1968 from J. Cary Davis, professor in the Inter-American Studies program, to Vice-President Robert MacVicar, Davis calls for a relocation of the Institute in order to make it more closely associated with the Foreign Language department and accessible to students. Labeled “on the edge of campus”, the Institute housed the Inter-American Studies program a mile away from Illinois Avenue on Lewis lane. That location, away from campus, made visitation and advisement assistance or information on the program difficult or out of the way.<sup>118</sup>

In July of 1968, in a memo between Albert Bork and chancellor MacVicar, formerly Vice-President, Bork called into question the university’s role in adequately preparing students for employment upon graduation.<sup>119</sup> Dr. Bork recognized that the Latin American Studies program, at an academic level, was nowhere near where individuals such as himself or Cary Davis had envisioned. One reason for the perceived setback was Bork’s dissatisfaction with the staff assigned to teach courses on Latin America. He does not question the professors’ abilities

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Letter from J. Cary Davis to V.P. MacVicar on institute location, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, February 5, 1968.

<sup>119</sup> Memo between A. Bork and Chancellor MacVicar July 22, 1968, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, July 22, 1968.

and knowledge, rather the university's lack of commitment to hire faculty with specialized training and background in business affairs related to Latin America. He uses the College of Business as one example of a department that suffered from lack specialists but other departments were in need of specialized and trained individuals as well.<sup>120</sup> An original goal of the university for the Inter-American Studies program included the opportunity for the university to "achieve high distinction" in this particular area.<sup>121</sup> According to Bork, if the university was to achieve such distinction and compete with the likes of Texas, Florida, Columbia, Harvard, and Michigan, then the additions of specialized and trained individuals to departments must occur.<sup>122</sup> As he, then, saw it, the university operated under false pretenses that enticed students to attend SIU for training that the university could not and did not offer.<sup>123</sup>

In 1972, a different exchange took place where Albert Bork expressed his concerns this time to the Vice-President of academic affairs, Isaac Brackett. Bork detailed the numerous educational opportunities the program and institute offered to students such chances to travel and study abroad to avoid academic complacency. That is to say complacency meaning that students go through the motions of attending classes and excitement in learning is lacking.<sup>124</sup> Bork believed academic complacency prevailed at the university level on college campuses across the country and needed to be avoided.<sup>125</sup> He further explained that complacency for Inter-American Studies students was avoidable when either he or his staff were given the opportunity to meet and advise them.<sup>126</sup> Bork wanted him or his staff to meet with students, rather than regular academic advisors because, in his opinion, there was a negative history of academic

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Preliminary Work-Sheets, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, June 1, 1956

<sup>122</sup> Memo between A. Bork and Chancellor MacVicar, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, July 22, 1968.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Memo between A. Bork and V.P. Brackett on place of Institute in University structure June 22, 1972, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 2, June 22, 1972.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

advisors looking unfavorably upon the Latin American Studies program.<sup>127</sup> Bork's opinion was well founded. Academic advisors did share this particular negative view with the students they advised. Many advisors discouraged students from either choosing to pursue the degree or simply select courses in the Inter-American Studies program.<sup>128</sup> Advisors labeled the program "too hard" and recommended students to choose other degrees or delay enrollment into the program.<sup>129</sup> What advisors meant was that the degree required a great deal of language credit hours combined with courses in multiple disciplines. In this fashion, advisors deliberately kept and directed away students from the Latin American Studies program, perhaps truly accounting for low enrollment numbers.

Even though students were advised to delay entering the program or avoid it entirely, the advisement was not without reason. In 1973, the Institute was formally shut down but the program continued to remain. The university formed an Inter-American Studies Advisory Committee to assess the program. The committee believed in the "tradition" Inter-American Studies had at the university and in order for the program to continue such "tradition", revisions needed to occur.<sup>130</sup> There were flaws in the original program with strict course requirements, particularly in language, which served as the main cause for low enrollment.<sup>131</sup> This view aligned with that of the advisement office. The committee thought the program could attract more individuals with changes to the curriculum, specifically in the number of language credit hours as referenced by William Simeone.

Bork's linguistic focus impaired the program's ability to attract more students. Inter-American Studies was a multi-disciplinary field comprised of language, history, economics,

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<sup>127</sup> Annual Report of the Latin American Institute School Year 1960-1961, LAIRSCRC SIU, Box 11, 1961

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Rationale for a Latin American Studies Program at SIU, DWPA, 1974.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

sociology, anthropology, and political science. The arrangement of the program and course load around language made the program an extension of the foreign language department.<sup>132</sup> Students with high linguistic aptitude were given more focus at the cost of deterring students with interests away from language such as history or political science. It was unusual for an academic field, interdisciplinary in nature, to make language the primary core of the degree. Reduction of language credit hours was the first step. The committee identified course-scheduling problems that hindered the program.

In addition, for students to fulfill all the requirements for Inter-American Studies, students needed to enter the program as freshman or early enough in their academic career.<sup>133</sup> This meant that students introduced to Latin America in 300 and 400 level social science courses wishing to enter the program could not do so due to its strict curriculum. Lastly, no introductory course for Inter-American Studies existed for students without any previous exposure to the field. In 1982, the need for an introductory course was recognized. The International Area Studies Committee, formed by John Guyon, Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Research, suggested that the program “would benefit from an entry-level course.”<sup>134</sup> The International Area Studies Committee advised university administration to add this course to the general studies curriculum so Inter-American Studies could attract new majors that might otherwise pass on it.<sup>135</sup>

The structure and content of the curriculum of any academic program is crucial to the program and to the success of students alike. In the case of the Latin American Studies program at SIU, the very foundation, and origin of its curriculum, set the program up for low enrollments. Mastery of language was important for any area studies program, but it is difficult to foresee any

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<sup>132</sup> Dr. David Werlich, interviewed by author, April 13, 2016.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>134</sup> Report of the International Area Studies Committee Concerning the Latin American Studies Program at SIU-C, DWPA, May 20, 1982.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*



program that so deeply depends on language alone to achieve substantial success. The Latin American Studies degree set out to reach academic distinction in the field of Latin American studies with the vision of Albert Bork. Latin American Studies curricular history was forged around Bork's central belief in language fluency, history, and through cultural immersion to prepare students for life upon graduation. Yet, it was Bork's love for language that ultimately Inter-American Studies curriculum's Achilles heel.

### **Conclusion**

At a time when Latino and Latin American Studies emerged in the U.S. as a scholarly field of study, SIU sought to develop a program that would bring national distinction to the university. The hiring of the Latin American Institute director Dr. Albert Bork distinguished the program at Carbondale, from other universities across the nation, because the Inter-American Studies sought to bridge two distinctive area/ethnic studies fields through its curricular focus and language fluency. At SIU, language was utilized in the curriculum as a mediating tool to connect two distinct groups. While language can unite ethnic groups, language alone does not an ethnicity make. In the case of self-identified Latinos, Spanish or Portuguese languages, in the U.S. context, did not make them less Latino. Language as a curricular requirement, for the program, dissuaded students intrigued by other aspects of Latin America and Latinos in relation to the U.S., such as politics and economics. While language played a significant role in the deterrent of students, lack of university support, coupled with a stringent curriculum, and lack of defined objective for students, contributed to low enrollment. In 1985, low enrollment raised questions about the effectiveness of the program in graduate preparedness and led to the removal of the degree from the university catalog. Today, issues of ethnic and racial conflict continue to

persist in our university. Administrators continue to cut ethnic studies programs by citing low enrollment numbers. What administrators have, and continue to oversee, is that enrollment numbers do not reflect the effectiveness of these programs. Ethnic studies programs impact students in ways that cannot be measured; they promote awareness and appreciation for those cultures.

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