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Assembling a Hispanic-Serving Institution: A Campus Landscape Analysis of a Hispanic-Serving Institution

Abstract

Post-secondary educational spaces are often thought of as a backdrop to where education takes place. Architectural designs are seen as neutral sites; however, higher education institutions are sites of ideological production and therefore, fundamental exercises of power (Ford, 2017). The study of campus landscapes is relevant to uncovering and illuminating larger social issues of (in)equality in higher education. Literature regarding campus landscapes is scarce and this study seeks to demonstrate how the study of campus landscapes is both materially "real" and socially constructed. This study takes place at a four-year institution of higher education that has received the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation for more than a decade. Using new materialism and assemblage theory to examine the materiality of campus landscapes and the entanglement of the HSI designation will demonstrate how campus landscapes are open and complex systems with various lines of flight and are constantly becoming.

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Assembling a Hispanic-Serving Institution:
A Campus Landscape Analysis of a Hispanic-Serving Institution

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Brenda Lee Jimenez Sifuentez

June 2019

Advisor: Dr. Ryan Evely Gildersleeve

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Abstract

Post-secondary educational spaces are often thought of as a backdrop to where education takes place. Architectural designs are seen as neutral sites; however, higher education institutions are sites of ideological production and therefore, fundamental exercises of power (Ford, 2017). The study of campus landscapes is relevant to uncovering and illuminating larger social issues of (in)equality in higher education. Literature regarding campus landscapes is scarce and this study seeks to demonstrate how the study of campus landscapes is both materially “real” and socially constructed. This study takes place at a four-year institution of higher education that has received the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation for more than a decade. Using new materialism and assemblage theory to examine the materiality of campus landscapes and the entanglement of the HSI designation will demonstrate how campus landscapes are open and complex systems with various lines of flight and are constantly *becoming*.

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Prelude

How would you describe a college campus? Would you immediately think about the quad, buildings, students, staff, and faculty or do you envision the green landscape of campus? One aspect you probably would not name is the construction that occurs on campus. Despite the fact that many college campuses are undergoing some form of construction. According to a report, entitled *State of Facilities in Higher Education*, there has been more than a 10% growth in facility construction since 2006, with research institutions investing in construction projects at higher rates (Sightlines, 2016). Often this growth in construction is driven by the increase desire for new research facilities, increase enrollment, and building renewal projects (Coulson, Roberts, & Taylor, 2015). Across the country campuses are seeking to revitalize their campus landscapes in order to attract the faculty and students. Nevertheless, campus construction is indicative of the values of the institution.

The campus landscape and design of higher education institutions contribute to the social production of the campus environment that is perceived by students, faculty, and administration and is normalized through their daily interactions with the campus landscape. Space is typically viewed as a neutral category that is transparent therefore, educational space is a vessel where education solely takes place. It is common to treat educational space as scenery, but institutions of higher education are sites where college

students come to learn and understand who and what matters (Dober, 1992). They are sites of production that teach subjectivity to advance capitalism (Ford, 2017). In producing the subjectivity, the distribution of neoliberal ideologies also occurs (Ford, 2017). While seeking prestige is often strived for by higher education institutions (Morphew, 2009), the physical setting can set the tone of institutional identity that reinforces scholastic ideals (Coulson et al., 2015). The built environment of higher education institutions is deeply rooted in the experience of students, faculty, and administrators (Coulson et al., 2015).

Higher education researchers have examined campus environments through an ecological framework focusing on campus physical components, human features, organizational structures, and the constructed or perceived environments (Strange & Banning, 2001; Strange, 2003). This line of research has traditionally focused on predictors that lead to student engagement and student success (Carini, Kuh, & Kline, 2006). Literature suggests that physical environment shapes the student experience in college and their belonging. Sense of place has been researched by Banning, Clemons, McKelfresh, and Gibbs (2010) indicates that an emotional bond exists between an individual or group with a geographic setting. According to Dober (2003), one of the expected outcomes for campus designs plans is to create a sense of place through the built and natural environment. However, campus landscape are not innocent backdrops where learning takes place, but rather they are central to the administration of the campus population.

The architecture of campus embodies ideologies of education through their physical arrangement and interactions with social space that is exercised through rules, time, and other organizational practices (McGregor, 2004). For example, what types of foods can be served on campus and when and where events can occur. Campus landscapes provide the fabric of disciplinary technology through its unremitting inspection and surveillance. This occurs through the way that space and time is organized in a certain way in order to develop normalized and classified customs on a day-to-day basis (Gulson & Symes, 2007). Therefore, studying space allows scholars to understand how campus landscapes are complicit in creating and upholding inequalities occurring in higher education.

Postsecondary education institutions can be sites for the reproduction of oppression; however, it can also be places for disruption (Ford, 2017). Space is not a neutral but is rather fundamental exercise of power that is a result of a political process (Peters, 1996), analyzing campus landscapes enriches the realities of power through spatial relations and productions. For example, a campus can dedicate space for underrepresented students to use but the location of the space in the basement of the building; demonstrates that the administration has the political power on campus. As public higher education institutions continue to have less state and federal funding, administrators develop of innovative ways to increase funding, one way this occurs is through campus structures. Campus buildings are evolving to become more functional spaces through mix-used buildings. For example, the consolidation of services such as

retail, dining, and administration blurs the boundaries of learning, social, and commercial spaces.

As administration responds to the lack of adequate funding by increasing tuition and creating new streams of revenue, the student demographic is also changing. For example, in 2018 over three million Latinx students were enrolled in two- or four-year institutions (HACU, n.d.). Over 66% of the three million Latinx students attend a Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) despite HSIs being only 15% of all higher education institutions (Excelencia in Education, 2019). As more Latinx students enter post-secondary education it is important to examine not only the system and process aspects of higher education institutions but also what the physical structure of campus is producing and how the concept of the HSI is brought into the *becoming* via campus landscapes.

In this study, I used ethnographic data to conduct an analysis within a new materialist philosophy. I theorized campus landscapes as assemblages (DeLanda, 2006) in order to produce new features and endless possibilities of *becoming* through campus landscapes. A key theme in the work of Deleuze and Guattari is the *becoming*, this is a response to the preoccupation a linear process and stable identity for external comparisons and relations of groupings (Jackson, 2010). The *becoming* is not a linear process between two points rather it has no origin, no destination, or goal (Jackson, 2010). Although the *becoming* is directional in that it is moving away from sameness the movement creates something unique that renders a category unnoticeable (Jackson, 2010). Assemblage theory acknowledges that there is a co-functioning of systems that are assembled together to serve an established relationship (DeLanda, 2006). When

theorizing campus landscapes as *assemblages*, this moves away from conceptualizing that there is a difference between design and planning and form and function to a more complex approach of territorial and spatial structure to see how campus landscapes can have parallel outcomes with contradicting conclusions. It also enables us to encounter how campus landscapes are *becoming* everyday rather than essentializing these spaces.

The following pages dive into the campus landscape analysis of the University of California, Merced (UC Merced) where I spent the last three academic years conducting ethnographic research. The past three years have been an eye-opening experience that has allowed me to live with and be data. I made intentional decisions to sit on campus with the data and with theory to demonstrate how the various assemblages on campus were shaping the *becoming* of a UC Merced as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. I invite you to join in thinking about the possibilities of higher education and of the Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation that has the potential to create something new for higher education.

Introduction

Campus landscapes are often thought of as neutral sites of where education occurs. Yet campus landscapes are not neutral; they are spaces that are constantly changing. Most higher education research centers on the campus climate as the essence of the student experience (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Museus & Jayakumar, 2012; Rankin & Reason, 2005) with little interrogation of how the materiality of campus landscapes contributes to the production of social relations and practices. This inquiry interrogated what campus landscapes produce at a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). Space is typically identified with what does not change and deemed static (Dovey, 2010), yet campus landscapes are constantly evolving. Spaces are not empty nor a neutral container. They are produced through the social interaction of inhabitants (Ford, 2017). Understanding the production of spaces allows for a deeper probe into the social, political, and economic forces that are producing campus spaces. The study of space and the struggle for space in higher education campus landscapes allows scholars to interrogate the relationship between space, power, and knowledge and to expose how campus landscapes can concurrently perpetuate and disrupt inequalities.

In 1984 a piece of legislation that identified higher education institutions that enrolled at least 40% Latinx students was introduced under Title III for Hispanic enrolling institutions (H.R. 5240, 1984; Valdez, 2015). The introduction of this piece of

legislation, Valdez (2015) argues, should be considered the first legislative attempt to define colleges and universities who serve a substantial number of Latinxs through a enrollment percentage designation. It would not be until 1992, that the creation of the Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation occurred. The establishment of this federal designation signified the increased access that Latinx students were experiencing at certain higher education institutions. The formation of the Hispanic-Serving Institution designation under the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 has allowed institutions to compete for grants under Title III and Title V and thus, build institutional capacity (Garcia, 2013). It also signified the importance of researching institutions that had been given the designation status and their ability to graduate more Latinx students. HSI research has explored the importance of Latinxs in workforce development, policy, student, faculty, and administrative experiences as well as organizational change. In addition, education scholars have discussed the ways that HSIs are diverse institutional types, which makes researching them difficult given the fluidity of enrollment and the uniqueness of each institution (Núñez, Crisp, & Elizondo, 2016). The designation has been associated as an institution that is able to close the Latinx education gap, in turn benefiting the nation's civic and economic health.

The purpose of this inquiry was to conduct an ethnographic spatial analysis of a higher education institution that has been designated as an HSI to gain insight on what campus landscapes produce. This inquiry took place at the University of California, Merced (UC Merced), the newest campus of the University of California system located in the Central Valley of California. The campus opened its doors in 2005, and by 2010,

UC Merced received the federal designation of Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). The physical space of campus is currently undergoing an expansion known as the 2020 project. The campus is scheduled to expand from 1.4 million square feet to 2.6 million square feet which will accommodate roughly 10,000 students by 2020. The current full-time equivalent enrollment is 8,544 students with 92.2% of the student body being undergraduate students (UC Merced, n.d.a). UC Merced's student body is 54.7% Latinx (UC Merced, n.d.a). The 2020 project expansion nearly doubles the size of the current campus landscape. As the campus continues to expand new buildings are emerging that will contribute to maintaining and/or reinforcing the social norms of the institution. This campus was chosen for this study because of the large and growing Latinx student population and the physical landscape growing to accommodate students. UC Merced is often described as the campus of the future because of its design plan and diversity of the institutions student body.

In this study, campus landscape is operationalized as the built structure such as buildings, allocation of building space for departments, clubs, and organizations. It also refers to the natural and constructed environment regarding vegetation and the network of systems that encompass aspects of life on campus such as pedestrian and vehicular paths, parking lots, and heritage spaces. This post-qualitative ethnographic inquiry of UC Merced's campus landscape illuminates what campus landscapes produce as an HSI. Post-qualitative inquiry is about "thinking without method" which frees inquiry from the imperatives of knowledge production and dependency on procedural methods (Jackson, 2017). Per post-qualitative and new materialist thought, focusing on what things do,

rather than what they are and how the process flows are what oriented this study. By focusing on power, resistance, and spatiality, this inquiry used assemblage theory to explore the different plausible *becomings* of UC Merced as an HSI.

I made the decision to incorporate “intermission pieces” within this inquiry as an attempt to capture the *becomings* through the everyday intra-action with the materiality of campus. Traditionally the intermission could be viewed as data of ethnographic field tales, however the intermission pieces are also part of the data that is always *becoming*. For instance, Jackson (2013) states “data is already multiplicitous—it is not dependent on being stabilized or known in an onto-epistemic project of qualitative research ‘interpretation’ and ‘analysis’” (p. 114). The data collected throughout the last three academic years helps provoke, explain, and elaborate the UC Merced assemblage. The data has been fluid, multiple, and the *becoming* analysis shows how the UC Merced assemblage is able to open and close lines of flight that allow for a shift in thinking of the HSI designation away from enrollment based to the daily interactions of Latinx students *becoming* via campus landscapes. The last three academic years I’ve spent collecting data, my endeavor was to explore the immanent dynamics within the UC Merced assemblage without regard to time; as Jackson (2013) states “things that ‘happen’ in a threshold include all that has occurred before as well as that-which-is-yet-to-occur” (p. 117). Therefore, this analysis is yet to be complete as it acknowledges that space and place in and outside of the UC Merced assemblage is fluid, this inquiry is constantly *becoming*.

Thinking with Theory

The study of space enables us to approach problems with new frameworks and will allow for the development of new proposals for the advancement of Latinxs in higher education institutions and campus design planning. Campus landscapes are sites for reproducing social inequalities in the physical and internal spaces of college campus. This study sought to expose inequalities while simultaneously demonstrating how these spaces are potential sites of liberation. For years, campus landscape planning has had a secure formula that is based on requirements of teaching, dining, sleeping, and entertaining (Coulson et al., 2015). However, campus planning should be more intricate as institutions are complex physical environments. Since campus landscape plans are informed and guided by long range development plans of an institution, it is important to consider how an institutional designation status might inform how campus landscapes are designed. Yet, studies have not focused on critically examining how an institutional designation, such as HSI, has multiple intrasections of space and spatial relations, these intrasections can provide insights into inequalities while also being sites for liberation. In order to expose what campus landscapes at an HSI produce this inquiry was framed as a post-qualitative inquiry using assemblage theory to explore what the UC Merced assemblage does.

Assemblage Theory

Assemblage theory and New Materialism foregrounds what it means to exist as a material being with biological needs living in a world of natural and artificial objects that are well-developed powers of governmentality and economic structures (Coole & Frost, 2010). While there are commonalities among new materialist scholars many have diverged in how they conceptualize materialist ontology (Fox & Alldred, 2015). This inquiry uses assemblage theory that is conceptualized by DeLanda (2006) and influenced by Deleuze and Guattari (1988), which considers how the physical and cultural gather to produce bodies and social formations. Assemblage theory recognizes the dimensions and utilization of co-functioning systems. None of the parts fit together nicely nor are they uniform either in nature or by origin. Instead, parts are assembled together to serve as an establishment of relationships (DeLanda, 2006). This is one way that assemblage theory aligns itself with campus landscapes, as designs always have an established relationship. Therefore, the dynamic set of relationships must be interrogated to create new understandings of power. Critical theory often documents power as an oppressive force; however, assemblage theory allows for power to have multiple and productive forms. Assemblage theory disrupts classic dualism of structure/agency, human/non-human, and subject/object (Fox & Alldred, 2015b).

Breaking with the assumption of a fixed point of reference, assemblage theory has three relational features that are in constant relationship with each other. The first is a system of elements that function as both the content and the expression. The second acknowledges what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) and others have named the

reterritorialization/deterritorialization which function as a spatial boundary but is also the components of an assemblage that have been drawn together. A territory is never stationary, it is always drawn towards something else and its components are emerging into new *becomings* (Beighton, 2013). Deterritorialization/territorialization designates a pre-established investment of objects (Deleuze & Guattari, 1998). For example, a higher education institution that has historically enrolled over 25% of Latinx students has a pre-established investment in Latinx students in order to receive the HSI status, but in a state of deterritorialization, increase tuition could price out Latinx students, triggering the institution to lose it the HSI status. When an assemblage under goes reterritorialization/deterritorialization itself the *becoming* occurs, it is not a change in the assemblage but rather its oscillating itself to incorporate new elements. Rather than seeing the assemblages as an organic whole, it is instead a place of *becoming* where various elements are drawn into the territory, changing their value, and bringing a new unity. When an assemblage is territorialized the components of the assemblage that have been subjected to stabilization and the territories of dominant discourse are also destabilized of power, while the assemblage seeks to protect the population of the given territory. The concept of territory is not always physical but also social, discursive, and material. For example, an institution that is designated an HSI does not cease operating as a historically white institution just because its undergraduate enrollment has reached 25% Latinx students. The ontology of new materialism brings forward the challenges of these complexities to see how the territory and the actants within the assemblage, are concurrently dismantling and upholding neoliberalism. The rejection of dichotomous

relationships in new materialism allows for an institution of higher education to be both an HSI and a traditionally white or minority-serving institution. Rejecting the conceptions of binary through assemblage theory allows for the interrogation of the different powers that are held together by the many lines of the assemblage that embody the HSI designation.

The final feature is the assemblage of materiality; material components should be understood as significant parts that provide insights and impressions of a world that is constantly *becoming*. As mentioned before, new materialism no longer sees bodies as occupying spaces but rather that all bodies are in relationships to materials. For students, faculty, and administrators their relationships to the materiality of campus landscape shifts with each interaction. Therefore, everything is in production with each other (Fox & Alldred, 2015). Assemblages of assemblages are constantly occurring around different actions and events, they are often frenzied networks of connections that are reassembled in different ways (Potts, 2004). The assemblage occurs on different social levels and constantly evolves. For example, congressional members and the Department of Education rely on data of graduation rates, retention, and job placement as a measure of institutional success which shifts the higher education assemblage to focus on standardized results to measure the success of Latinx students.

The classical “subject” does not exist in assemblage theory, but it is part of an effect of *becoming* which communicates the changes and capacities of the entity. The *becoming* can change in more than one capacity; it is a representation of a social product that is non-linear, but rather a production of assortments. For example, Gildersleeve and

Sifuentez (2017) highlight the production of assortments through their analysis of Latinx graduation ceremonies through the universities' sponsorship or hosting of a ceremony, the institution "potentially becomes something, new, different, dissident." (p. 58). The assemblage also can function as territories that have been produced due to the affects between relations (Fox & Alldred, 2015b). The challenges of binaries are explicitly stated in assemblage theory. Results can have parallel outcomes and at times make contradictory conclusions. Instead of having to fall into dichotomous support or reject, assemblage theory problematizes this by acknowledging the tension and multiple dimensions of any produced situation. Assemblages are constantly evolving and reconfiguring territories that represent the process of *becoming* of lives, societies, and history (Gildersleeve & Sifuentez, 2017).

The acknowledgement of materialism through assemblage theory gives scholars the ability to move beyond a dichotomous understanding of higher education that often focuses on if an institution is effective by yielding low admission rates and graduation rates are high. Assemblage theory pushes the boundaries of understanding typology, experience, and purpose to acknowledge that assemblages are everywhere. Assemblages multiply in different directions that can change at slower speeds, are fluid and impermanent, and can appear as fast as they disappear. The HSI designation lends itself to be conceptualized as an assemblage because in some ways the designation rejects the idea of universality. There is not one way to educate Latinx students, and there is not a universal approach that institutions are following once they obtain the HSI designation. This is due to the various lines of assemblage that are constantly reterritorializing an

individual HSI. This study seeks acknowledges that HSIs are constantly *becoming* and pushes the designation to not be restricted to only an outcome-based agenda rather that we continue to reimagine how the HSI designation and its campus landscape is *becoming*. In order to illuminate the *becoming* that is occurring at UC Merced, this inquiry examines how the campus landscape design plans have parallel outcomes that are contributing to the *becomings*.

Assemblage theory acknowledges that there is a constant state of *becoming* that occurs through the intractions of various machines that produce unintentional events. *Becoming* can be described as the “operation of self-differentiation, the elaboration of a difference within a thing, a quality or system that emerges or actualizes only in duration” (Grosz, 2005, p. 4). Duration is where life takes place and where difference is demonstrated, through the opening and fracturing of the past and present, it is what is undone and what it makes (Grosz, 2005). Difference is not the opposition of sameness but rather is immanent to sameness (Jackson, 2013). The *becoming* is not a linear process, for example it does not start when a student attends orientation and it does not end at graduation rather there is no point of origin and no destination, it has no ending. Therefore, the *becoming* of Latinx student is constant as campus lines of flight are immanently formed, their formation creates new pathways (both materially real and socially constructed) for escape, transformation, and *becoming*. The materiality of campus has created potential for the *becoming* not only of itself through matter but also how this matter becomes part of the Latinx students *becoming*. The *becoming* only occurs depending on “its capacity to link with, to utilize, and transform, that is to unbecome, the

apparent givenness and inertia of material objects to give to these new virtualities, new impulses, and potential” (Grosz, 2005). In the UC Merced assemblage this occurs through the campus landscape material and discursive objects. When they interact with each other they produce new potentials for the UC Merced assemblage and the actants of the assemblage in this case the Latinx students.

Creating something new is the focus of this inquiry through ethnographic observations, interviews, and archival research along with thinking with theory has demonstrated that parallel outcomes of the UC Merced assemblage exists. These parallel outcomes are the *becoming* institutional agent and the *becoming* Latinx student. The parallel outcomes are produced by the architectural design by demonstrating how campus landscapes are sites for liberation and regulation. The UC Merced assemblage produces parallel contradictory conclusions for the Latinx student. The *becoming* Latinx student at an HSI has multiple lines of flight that seek to shape how Latinx students come to understand their campus HSI designation status and how space and place come to shape their *becoming*. The complexities of Latinx students attending an HSI and the forms of knowledge that are produced and circulated by students is the focus of this inquiry. By thinking with assemblage theory and the *becoming*, the inquiry is able to illuminate the dynamism of the everyday campus landscape and the *becoming* of the UC Merced assemblage.

Part One: Mapping the Assemblages

In the Assemblage

Assemblages help explain the existence of things in the world (Buchanan, 2017) they are active in a sense, as they can be mapped. The mapping of the UC Merced assemblage will demonstrate what is possible for the campus as a Hispanic-Serving Institution through the design of campus landscapes. Assemblages prefer not to change which is why deterritorialization is always followed by reterritorialization (Buchanan, 2017), however, as lines of flight intrasect with the UC Merced assemblage there is an oscillation that occurs to the assemblage. Assemblages are an individual entity such as a person, community, organization, or city; they have their own historical identity (DeLanda, 2006). Because assemblage theory acknowledges that the ontological status of all assemblages is the same, they are able to interact with one another without hierarchy. The concept of the assemblage is a way of analyzing a situation or a thing and not a way of providing description (Buchanan, 2017). In order to do this not only humans are incorporated in the analysis but so is the material and expressive components, since the day to day practices take place in defined territories of the assemblage (DeLanda, 2006). This inquiry does not seek to provide a description of what is occurring to the UC Merced rather the analysis provides insights of how the UC Merced assemblage is *becoming*.

A new materialist ontology does not see data as inert and indifferent. Rather, it acknowledges that data has their ways of making themselves logical to us (MacLure, 2013). While ethnographic methods served as a research tool to contextualize events and their assemblages, the overall inquiry departed from attending to the classical subjects but rather focusing on the flows within the assemblages of UC Merced. This study draws from new materialist ontology that shifts the unit of analysis from the human agent to the assemblage, no longer focusing on what bodies and social institutions are doing, but rather focusing on the capacities for action, interaction, feelings, and desire of groups of bodies affected by flows of the assemblage. Therefore, tools of interpretive research such as interviews that tend to reflect human actions and experiences shift to efforts to disclose the relations within assemblages and the flows that occurs between relations (Fox & Allen, 2015b).

Components of an assemblage. Any assemblage is comprised of different discrete assemblages which themselves multiply as lines are created (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000). It is not about the relations rather it is a relation amongst themselves. In order to conceptualize UC Merced as an assemblage, it is important to understand how assemblages intrasected to create UC Merced in the first place. *“What is Our Story”* provides a historical context of how education was formed in California. The higher education assemblage of the California is an important point of departure as it still actively shapes the UC Merced assemblage. This historical approach is not bounded by time nor space as the assemblages of politics, economy, and social discourse still have a role in shaping the current iterations of the UC Merced assemblage. Rather *“What is Our*

Story” provides insight regarding the discrete assemblages that are still active in the UC Merced assemblage, while the lines of flight may have slowed down, they are still active within the assemblage.

The UC Merced assemblage is a nested set of assemblages that bring to materiality the campus landscape. Each nested assemblage intrasect with each other to deterritorialize and reterritorialize the assemblage. They come together as parts to create a whole, the whole that emerged in this inquiry is UC Merced. Assemblages that will be discussed throughout this inquiry provide a state, regional, and local context of UC Merced. For example, the formation of the California Master Plan for Higher Education as an assemblage interacted with the growing demographic change of the state and enrollment projections led to the creation of UC Merced. This is just one example of the various assemblages that continue to interact with the UC Merced assemblage. Each part of this inquiry is a moving piece within the analysis that provides the dimensions of the UC Merced assemblage while demonstrating how they are in constant relation with one another. Every assemblage intracts with each other at different times and at various velocities, each interaction produces something new.

UC Merced as an assemblage. As an assemblage, UC Merced is a set of lines within the larger assemblage of higher education. The UC Merced assemblage emerged from parts of larger assemblages within the state of California. As you will read, the population, social, political, and economic assemblages of the state pushed for the creation the tenth University of California campus. This inquiry seeks to navigate the materially real and social construction of the UC Merced assemblage through exposing

the possibilities of how an HSI campus can be a source of limitations and opportunities. For example, the institution can create rituals and policies in order to teach Latinx students how to be a UC Merced student by enforcing institutional norms. But the close-knit community of Latinx students are also an emergent property that mobilizes against the institution. They are assemblages within the assemblage that are producing parallel outcomes.

The UC Merced assemblage is constantly oscillating and intracting with other assemblages that produce new possibilities. This inquiry will discuss various assemblages that intractated to create the institution. Outside of creating the institution, it will also interrogate how the assemblages are coming to shape the physical territory of UC Merced and the *becoming* of UC Merced Latinx students. To do this I focused on the expressive and material components of the assemblage. The expressive components of the assemblage included the ways students learned to be a UC Merced student, how they created their own path on campus, and how they defined an HSI campus.

UC Merced as territory. Located in California's Central Valley, UC Merced is part of emergent systems that came together to form the UC Merced assemblage where the physical and discursive become inherit. The architectural design of UC Merced becomes the assemblage that establishes the relational lines of campus through its buildings, greenery, and other materiality. The campus is the geographical bounded area that are marked by expressive signs, architectural styles, and spaces for gathering. As the campus expands the bounded area is also marked by construction fences and barricades.

The design plan is assembled together as an establishment of relationships. The relationships are expressed through the institutional goals and the utilizations of spaces.

UC Merced as an architectural assemblage creates a stabilized experience for actants. It is within this bounded space that the UC Merced assemblage is legitimized. In the UC Merced territory Latinx students learn the institutions authority structure and how to operate in the territory. The spatial boundaries of UC Merced are designated through campus maps. It is through mapping and the physical parameters of campus that creates a territory where learning, research, and living occurs. Although the territory can be physical it is also discursive, social, and material. While the campus landscape provides the physical parameters for the assemblage, the social, discursive, and material also are part of the territory of UC Merced. For example, the buildings, pathways, and events students attend express the territory of the assemblage. These components of the assemblage are also their own assemblage that operate at smaller scales (DeLanda, 2006).

Intermission: Thinking with Theory

This inquiry is informed by post-qualitative methods that seeks to depart from traditional ways of understanding data but rather is informed by thinking with theory throughout the entire process. Thinking with theory focuses on the process rather than concepts by plugging in the data with philosophical concepts rather than conventional qualitative data analysis (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012). Departing from traditional higher education research, thinking with theory seeks to accomplish the reading of data “that is both within and against interpretivism” (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p. vi). Choosing to depart from the traditions of higher education research to conduct a post-qualitative

inquiry meant that I need to make decisions that were outside of normative qualitative inquiry. Thinking with theory allowed me to explore, gather, and think with data that opened up new possibilities.

Departing from traditional higher education methods I was able to think and analyze data by grounding my methods and methodology in a philosophical approach. Using new materialism and assemblage theory opened up new possibilities for examining higher education institutions. I made the choice to shift this inquiry in order to complicate the way that Hispanic-Serving Institutions are discussed in the literature. Post-structural theorists used in this inquiry stress the attempt to decenter the humanistic traps such as making meaning in order to explain what things do rather than what they are. I focused on HSIs as the idea that Latinx students on campus were not a separate category from everything else but rather they are entangled with the materiality of the campus landscape. By selecting new materialism and assemblage theory as my philosophical and theoretical inquiry, I made a decision to acknowledge that the materially real and the social constructions of campus landscapes do something to Latinx students on an HSI campus. As you will read in the following pages, campus landscapes are theorized as an assemblage that allows for the new ways of demonstrating how a campus landscape acts upon students.

Assemblage theory recognizes the heterogenous connections and elements that bring their own set of dynamics and characteristics that provide temporal and spatial areas. In choosing to depart from traditional methodological approaches, I recognize that this inquiry is unique as there is no central data analysis chapter rather the data is

constantly discussed through the intractions of the various assemblages. However, appendix A and B provide the reader detailed information on the data that was collected throughout the inquiry. It was through this inquiry that I also participated in intraacting with my own assemblage by *becoming* researcher.

Overview of Sections

This inquiry is divided into five parts, “*Mapping the Assemblage*,” “*What is Our Story*,” “*Constructing the Landscape*,” “*Entangled Becomings*,” and “*Possibilities*” each part of this inquiry is entangled with each other as they demonstrate how each assemblage does not operate in isolation from each other but rather intrasects with each other in order to produce the UC Merced assemblage.

“*What is Our Story?*’ provides insights of the numerous lines of flight that came together in order to for UC Merced exists. California viewed higher education as a tool for economic stability for individuals and the state. This part of the inquiry covers the historical lines of light that align in order to create the California Master Plan for Higher Education. As California population continued to grow the increasing number of college-aged students seeking entry to higher education would signal the need for the University of California (UC) system to expand. In this section you will read how the historical lines of flight intrasected in order for the UC system to create its tenth campus. In 2005, the University of California, Merced opened its doors for instruction despite many believing this would never occur.

“*Constructing the Landscape*” discusses what the UC Merced assemblage does through the campus design plans. As an architectural assemblage the buildings, pathways,

and greenery are the content and the expression of the UC Merced assemblage. The landscape is designed to create an identity for the institution and for Latinx students. This section will go over what the assemblage does and how intrasecting lines of flight alter the UC Merced assemblage ability to create one standardized outcome. Acknowledging that lines of flight in the UC Merced assemblage slow down and reappear, this section highlights points of new *becomings* through the assemblage and the actants.

In “*Entangled Becomings*” the assemblages previously discussed are demonstrated through their ability to interact with each other in order to produce two parallel outcomes: the *becoming* institutional agent and the *becoming* Latinx student. While they are parallel they are also in relations with each other. As all assemblages produce new *becomings* as they interact with each other. Intermission pieces in this section provide insights to what the assemblages are accomplishing. This section sheds light into how the *becomings* of the institutional agent and the Latinx student are affected by the materiality of the campus landscape.

The “*Possibilities*” are endless, and the conclusion of this inquiry brings together how the UC Merced assemblage is constantly oscillating as new lines of flight are introduced in the assemblage. This section argues that when thinking with assemblage theory we cannot assume that this inquiry is ever ending; instead we must view this inquiry as a piece of *becoming*, since even as I write this the *becoming* is still occurring for the UC Merced assemblage, Latinx students, and myself as a researcher.

Part Two: What is Our Story?

Introduction

To analyze the current structure of California's higher education system, it is important to know the various lines of flight that have influenced and shaped the higher education assemblage in California. The most noticeable component was the creation of the California Master Plan for Higher Education. This plan would create the higher education assemblage and territorialize the higher education system. Before the creation could occur, several lines of flight had to intrasect in order for the higher education assemblage to function the way it currently does. As previously mentioned, an assemblage is comprised of a set of relational lines that hold together in order to produce an assemblage. The UC Merced assemblage as a nested set of assemblages emerged through a constructive process that laid out a specific arrangement. The arrangement would eventually go on to produce the UC Merced campus and continue to influence the *becoming* of the assemblage.

The *What Is Our Story* section will cover the creation of higher education in California from unregulated higher education institutions to the formation of a tripartite system, the state's enrollment projections, and the eventual creation of the tenth University of California (UC) system campus, UC Merced. And the emergence of post-secondary education as a tool for social mobility for Californians and economic stability for the state. To be able to know what the UC Merced assemblage is, we cannot assume

that the UC Merced campus is the final product or that it is independent of social and historical processes from which it emerged. This section seeks to provide information regarding how the constructive process emerged to produce the higher education assemblage for California and from this how UC Merced emerged as a nested set of assemblages.

The State and Education

In 1872, the formation of California's system of education was starting to take shape. Common schools were located in the northern urban area, one normal school in San Jose, and the University of California (UC) in Berkeley Hills which was struggling financially (Douglass, 2000). The University of California was originally created under statutory law and funded by federal grants administered through the Morrill Act of 1864 (Douglass, 2000). The passage of the Morrill Act of 1864 provoked state policy makers to discuss how to educate the growing population (Douglass, 2000). The state's population had been rapidly increasing, in 1850, the population was 165,000 which grew to 379,994 by 1860 due to immigration from Europe and Asia (Kennedy, 1864). With no current structure in place that would align educational institutions, discussion shifted to developing an education system in order to meet the growing populations needs. Education was viewed as a great equalizer that would provide social and economic mobility for the individual and the state; a financial investment would increase opportunities for social and economic mobility (Douglass, 2000). Education as a tool for social mobility continues to be the norm in popular discourse, which views the investment in oneself as an investment for the state and nation, and vice-versa.

In the mid-1870s there had been a growing mistrust of the government due to a nationwide economic depression, corporate corruption within the railroad industry and their growing political and economic power (Douglass, 2000). Additionally, with the growing population, there was an increase desire to bring regulations to the state to stop corruption (Douglass, 2000). This led to the call for a new governmental convention (Douglass, 2000). During the convention of 1879, a proposal was made to elevate the status of the University of California (UC) from statutory provision to a ‘public trust’ (Douglass, 2000). This resulted in the UC Board of Regents power no longer being derived from the legislature, therefore, granting them full autonomy over the institution and the ability to define the mission and programs of the state’s land-grant institution (Douglass, 2000). The UC Board of Regents would consist of 26 board members (Finney, Riso, Orosz, & Boland, 2014). This decision gave the UC Board of Regents power to shape the structure of higher education and its operations.

John Douglass (2010), an educational historian, has called the period from 1900 to 1920, *The California Idea*. This idea is that postsecondary education was no longer a privilege but a right for California high school graduates. Education would be the key to individual’s socioeconomic mobility and California’s economic and cultural maturity. The state and local government’s ability to rationally and equitably provide access to higher education would become the focus for state decision makers (Douglass, 2000). It is important to note that Douglass also recognizes that *The California Idea*, an altruistic image, was also created during a time of racial segregation and discrimination (Douglass, 2000). During this time period, California created public junior colleges to educate and

train students, allowing the University of California to focus on research and advanced teaching. At Berkeley, the restructuring of education created lower and upper division for undergraduate education effectively created the Associates of Arts degree (Douglass, 2000). In 1921, the centralized governance of the normal schools was shifted to the State Board of Education and raised teacher training to a four-year postsecondary program (Douglass, 2000). These pivotal decisions by the legislature and educational governing bodies moved California to become a leader in higher education in the nation (Douglass, 2000). The disbursement of junior colleges and normal schools throughout the state allowed Californians to access post-secondary education at higher rates than the rest of the nation (Douglass, 2000). According to Douglass (2010) by the 1930s approximately 24 percent of the college-age population was enrolled in institutions of higher education while the national average was 12 percent.

California's economy was transformed by World War II. Although agriculture was still important, manufacturing and technology industries would become the primary economic drivers in the state (Douglass, 2000). The creation of a higher education tripartite system created clear lines between the different institutional types. The tripartite system included community colleges that would provide associate degrees and vocational training. The California State University system (CSU) formally known as teaching or normal schools, would prepare teachers and grant bachelor's and master's degrees. This allowed for the University of California system to focus on research and granting doctoral degrees. The tripartite system brought applied research and technical training to aid in the booming economy (Douglass, 2000). Returning veterans seeking to use the GI

bill sparked increased enrollment to higher education institutions causing the construction of temporary structures and the broad desire to create new campuses (Douglass, 2000; Thelin & Gasman, 2010). All of these lines of flight would lead to the efforts by legislators to create new campuses in their districts and the desire for California State Universities to expand graduate training in areas such as engineering (Douglass, 2000). During this time, California was facing mounting costs and had a tax system that was no longer sustainable, given the population growth and the need to expand public infrastructure and services. In the 1950s, California's population had grown to 10,490,070 which was a 51.9% growth from 1940 census when the population was 6,907,387 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1950). In the late 1950s, the state faced its largest budget deficit since the Great Depression (Douglass, 2000). The inadequate tax system did not allow the state to keep up with the needs of the growing population.

The growth in population, along with the idea that education would be the key to California's economic and cultural mobility, led to the desire to organize higher education institutions (Douglass, 2000). The three different institutional types were the state's effort to invest "in human capital and research" (Douglass, 2000, p. 9). Each institutional type would go on to have a purpose and goals in order to contribute to the economic stability of the state and its people (California State Department of Education, 1960). What makes this line of flight in the higher education assemblage unique is the rigorous attempt to territorialize each system of higher education through the development of the California Master Plan for Higher Education (Master Plan). The development of the Master Plan would come to signify California's ability to control who

and what belongs at each institutional type. The political, economic, and social issues of California shaped the way higher education institutions would operate in the state early on (Douglass, 2000). The lines of flight of an unorganized higher education institutions, politics and economic mobility for the state, came together in order to create the higher education assemblage otherwise known as the California Master Plan for Higher Education. The creation of the three institutional types were all seeking to serve its purpose for the betterment of the state and its population. Prior to 1959, the three institutional types operated independently and in competition of each other. It would not be until the creation of the California Master Plan for Higher Education, that these lines of flight would create relational lines in order to produce the higher education assemblage.

California Master Plan for Higher Education. In 1959 Assemblywoman Dorothy M. Donahoe introduced legislation that would require the governing board of the University of California (UC) Board of Regents and the State Board of Education to work together to bring order to institutions of higher education system (Douglass, 2000). UC President Clark Kerr had come to realize that the political power was no longer concentrated within the UC; state universities (CSUs) were beginning to gain power as legislators were unable to create a UC in their district turned to creating state colleges (Douglass, 2000). Recognizing that this could alter the future of the UC system, President Kerr worked with Assemblywoman Donahoe to introduce legislation that would organize California's higher education system by making it more accessible to the people of California (Douglass, 2000). The passing of the legislation gave each governing board

six-months to negotiate a plan on how each system would operate. A Liaison Committee was established between UC Board of Regents and State Board of Education (Holy, 1961). The Liaison Committee was made up of four members of the two boards and the President of the UC system and Superintendent of Public Instruction (Holy, 1961). This committee agreed to establish a Master Plan survey team (Douglass, 2000).

The Master Plan survey team was led and chaired by Arthur Coons, the President of Occidental College, a private liberal arts college in Los Angeles. The representatives were from the three public institutions and the association of private colleges (Holy, 1961). The two main delegates played a large role were Glenn Dumke, president of San Francisco State, and Dean McHenry, a political science professor at UCLA (Douglass, 2000). The survey team met for the first time in November of 1960 (Holy, 1961). The creation of a large number of advisory groups began to work on reports and advise on issues ranging from enrollment planning and finance (Douglass, 2000). The majority of the conversations were centered on state funding support for research and the offering of the Ph.D. degree. Kerr and McHenry refused to have any other institution of higher education offer the Ph.D., nor wanted a shift in state and federal sponsored research funding. The deadline imposed by the legislation was approaching and Coons worried that no compromise would be achieved (Douglass, 2000). After much negotiation, Coons was able to get the team to agree on a proposal that would allow state colleges to gain their own governing board through a state constitutional provision with autonomy like the UC system. In addition, a joint doctoral program between the UC system and state colleges would be created in fields such as education (Douglass, 2000). Within six

months, the survey team had put together recommendations for a higher education plan that needed approval from the legislature, UC Board of Regents, and the State Board of Education governing bodies (Holy, 1961; Douglass, 2000). The Master Plan compact was submitted in February of 1960, with the urgency that legislators not unravel it but accept all the recommendations as a package (Douglass, 2000). In April 1960 the “Donahoe Higher Education Act” commonly known as the California Master Plan for Higher Education, would be signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown (Douglass, 2000).

There has been a series of legislative bills that made slight alterations to the original Master Plan. One of these changes occurred in 1967 when the community college governing board was removed from the responsibility of the State Board of Education and the position of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges was established. As part of the Master Plan, the establishment of the Coordinating Council for Higher Education was created. Although in 1973 it would be renamed as the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC). Its original purpose of reviewing “the need for and location of all proposals for new campuses and educational centers presented by any of the three public higher education governing boards” (California Postsecondary Education Commission, Sacramento, 1999, pg. i) would stay intact. The CPEC (1999) would provide an analysis to the legislature and governor that addressed issues of enrollment demand, geographical location, possible alternatives, and projected cost as the primary areas of concern in developing new institutions. The CPEC (1999) has a list of ten criteria for reviewing a new campus: (a) enrollment projections, (b) consideration of alternatives and environmental impact, (c) academic planning and

program justification, (d) geographical and physical accessibility, (e) serving the disadvantaged, (f) effects on other institutions, and (g) consideration of needed funding and economic efficiency. Since the commission's existence in 1960, the board had never reviewed a proposal for a new campus from the University of California (UC) system, however that would soon change when enrollment projections indicated a tenth campus would be needed. The UC system is considered a statewide institution that needs to meet the states enrollment demands and evaluate the physical capacity of current UC campuses ability to meet statewide needs (CPEC, 1999). The CPEC (1999) had only received and reviewed proposals from state universities and community colleges which focus on the regional needs of the service area. However, when considering an additional campus to the UC system, a regional framework is not of importance since the UC system is viewed as meeting the needs of the state.

A series of compromises in structure, purpose, and governance ultimately led to the creation of the California Master Plan of Higher Education that has a basic promise to foster the growth of education at a manageable cost to the people of the state (Douglass, 2000). The impact of the Master Plan was not necessarily what it changed but its ability to create and stabilize the assemblage of higher education. Attempts were made to stabilize the higher education assemblage through the Master Plan by having each institutional type be rigidly defined. This is an example of how the California Master Plan for Higher Education seeks to create and stabilize its own assemblage. There have also been instances of deterritorialization such as the offering of doctoral in education degrees outside of the UC system. The push to have state institutions offer doctoral

degrees was a line of flight that disrupted the Master Plan assemblage. Yet the assemblage was able to reterritorialize through joint partnerships. The stabilization occurred with the creation of joint doctoral programs being offered at state institutions in partnership with the UC system. The tripartite system was established in order to ensure each institutional type was meeting the needs of the state. In the process, it also created admission standards that determine who is eligible for admissions at each institutional type. The admission standards is a line of flight that functions to stabilize and territorialize the Master Plan assemblage. In order to gain admissions to a UC campus, students must be at the top 12.5% of graduating seniors, for state institutions the top 33%, and community colleges would accept students “any high school graduate and any other person over eighteen years of age . . . capable of profiting from the instruction offered” (California State Department of Education, 1960, p. 70).

As the California Master Plan was being developed discussions regarding racial segregation and the structural racism in the primary and secondary education system was never taken into consideration. The key players involved in the development of the California Master Plan of Higher Education believed that the biggest obstacle to accessing higher education was affordability (Douglass, 2000). At the time of the passage of the California Master Plan, the state was majority white; of the 15 million Californians, 14 million were white (U.S. Census Bureau, 1960). California soon would see a growth in population once again yet this time the population would diversify.

Creating the 21st Century Institution in the 20th Century

The Central Valley has been discussed as a site for a research institution as early as 1903 (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). The desire to locate a research institution in the Central Valley had always been framed as the need to educate the growing population and improve the economy of the Central Valley (Hebel, 2005). However, because of the politics of the state, the discussion has always been divided between the Bay area elites versus the Valley farmers; however, without the political power, the Valley farmers always lost the bid of building a UC in the region (Douglass, 2000). This would change as the assemblage of the UC system was becoming deterritorialized through intrasecting new lines of flight such as the shifting demographics, political pressures, and the long-term educational needs of the state. These new lines of flight would cause the assemblage to acknowledge the shifting interests of the state. The disruption of the UC assemblage created a state of reterritorialization and deterritorialization as it was attempting to absorb and normalize these new lines of flight into the assemblage.

Prior to the opening of UC Merced, high school students who lived in the Central Valley and wanted to attend a UC institution would have to travel about 120 miles to Davis or Berkeley campus (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). The Central Valley was home to ten percent of the state's population which was growing at twice the rate as the state and also had the youngest population in terms of average age (Thorman, Bohn, & Hsieh, 2018; Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). During the 1990s, the largest public institution in the Central Valley was the 17 correctional institutions that are located throughout the Central Valley. Of these 17 correctional institutions, nine of them opened since 1990 (Tomlinson-

Keasey, 2007). The University of California system had not built an additional campus since 1965. In terms of postsecondary education sites, twelve community college and three state comprehensive institutions served the Central Valley. Only 14.2% of the Central Valley's population held a college degree and only 3.4% attended a research institution (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007).

This data and other lines of flight ultimately led to the push for the creation of the University of California at Merced, the institution that would be a part of the UC system with a 140-year-old history, known for standards of excellence and student-involved research. UC Merced would join a system of nine other prestigious institutions. In the late 1980s, the projected enrollment growth began to worry the UC President Garner and the Board of Regents about the ability to serve future students. The projected enrollment growth would derive from the children of baby boomers and the increase presence of Asian and Latinx immigrants (Gordon, 1988). This led to the request by UC President Garner for updated growth plans by each campus. The projected enrollment plans indicated that at least three new campuses would need to be created in order to meet the demands of an educated populace (Gordon, 1988). However, the legislative analyst's office believed there was no justification for building three new institutions, it would only need "one new campus at most" (Trombley, 1989, para. 8). The partnership between then UC President Garner and California Governor Deukmejian led to the decision of creating a tenth campus in 1983 (Desrochers, 2007). Prior to the election of Governor Deukmejian, funding for higher education had suffered; the previous two governors had cut the UC system budget and the passing of a tax propositions had limited the state's

budget discretion. However, Governor Deukmejian would prove to be open to supporting the UC system, as UC President Gardner asked for an almost 30% budget increase. Gardner appointed a site selection task force in March of 1998 with the objective of identifying 50 to 60 sites statewide that could be considered (CPEC, 1999). The site locations would ultimately be narrowed to a list of eight finalists in 1991 (CPEC, 1999). In early 1990, the UC Regents decided to focus on the Central Valley due in part to the low participation rates of the area compared to the rest of the state.

During the 1990s, as planning for the campus began at UC Regents meetings, opposition to a new campus arose. Reflecting the resistance that occurred during the formation of the higher education system, the idea of a new campus was not welcomed. Leadership from the existing campuses did not see the need for the creation of another institution, as that would mean that their particular institution would not receive funds (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). Rather, they believed their institutions could absorb the projected enrollments (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). Similar to fights in the past during the formation of the master plan for higher education, the main issue for other campus leadership would be centered around the allocation of funding. Existing campuses felt that there were dire projects that needed attention on existing campuses rather than allocating funds for a campus that was not even open and not projected to be operating until 1998 (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007).

For many who lived in the Central Valley, especially those who advocated and organized for the institution, the research university was seen as a new economic engine of the region. It would diversify the economic structure of the Central Valley so that it no

longer relied solely on agriculture. The Central Valley has a dominant role in America's farm to fork capital. According to the Central Valley Ag Plus Consortium, in 2011, 11 billion dollars in agricultural exports occurred. With the UC selection committee being charged by the UC Regents to focus on the Central Valley, eight potential sites were chosen in 1990. Public meetings in Fresno and Modesto were held to gain public input, these hearings were well attended by community members (CPEC, 1999). In March of 1991, the task force presented the finalists to the UC Board of Regents. These finalists were located in Fresno, Madera, and Merced counties. The progress on site selection was slowed down given the lack of funding (CPEC, 1999). An attempt was made to stabilize the UC assemblage by picking the locations of potential sites, however, outside emergent system such as the disinvestment of funds to higher education would alter the assemblage.

California's fiscal budget had taken a turn in 1991 and with the passing of Proposition 98, which protected budgets for K-12 schools and community colleges, the University of California system was left vulnerable (Desrochers, 2007). In 1995, the UC Board of Regents would appoint Richard Atkinson as UC system President. Upon entering this position, President Atkinson was not in favor of creating a tenth campus as the other existing campuses did not have enough resources. In addition, President Atkinson was unsure that the enrollment projections would actually come to fruition (Desrochers, 2007). This significantly slowed the process of planning. In order to keep the project going under financial constraints, President Atkinson would increase services to the region. Since 1986, an outreach office in Fresno had already been established to

recruit students to other UC institutions (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). Not only was President Atkinson hesitant to proceed, the leadership planning team also had to deal with negative publicity claiming the campus would never be open (Desrochers, 2007). For example, one opinion editorial piece, in *Los Angeles Times*, criticized the money spent on the site selection process and that if students from the Central Valley wanted to attend a UC they could drive (Glick, 1993). The negative publicity could have stopped the development of the research institution; however, pressures applied to the UC system would eventually push the planning process to become active. The opening the tenth campus of the system would have to be put on hold; there would be no grand opening ceremony in 1998.

All of California's research institutions were shaped by the political forces of the state and eventually outweighed the importance of increasing access to students in the Central Valley. The delay in opening the doors in 1998 would mean that the new institution would have to endure another economic down turn of the state during the early 2000s (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). The state's financial worries in 1991 slowed the process of choosing a location. The building of the tenth campus became less of a priority. However, as with all assemblages, emerging lines of flight began to be drawn into the assemblage and intrasect with each other. This would again bring the focus on the creation of the tenth campus.

Table 1

Key Elected Officials that aided in the Creation of UCM

Name and political affiliation	Involvement
Cruz Bustamante (D-Fresno)	Used his power as the Speaker of the Assembly to work with the state budget to allocate resources to UCM
Dennis Cardoza (D-U.S. House of Representatives Cal 18 th)	Fostered bipartisan relationship to garner support in both houses. Grew up in the Central Valley and also served as a city council member of Merced and Atwater
John Garamendi Sr. (D-Cal Insurance Commissioner)	Aided the Office of the President in setting up meetings with other elected officials

Elected to the California State Assembly in 1993, Cruz Bustamante, originally from Dinuba, located 84 miles south of Merced, had been vocal regarding his opinion on the allocation of state funds to the San Joaquin Valley as not being equal. He would also argue that a UC in the Central Valley would “fundamentally change the economy and political environment” (Allen, 2012, para. 22). Since his election in 1993, to his appointment as Speaker of the Assembly in 1996, Bustamante had been a vocal supporter for the creation of a UC campus in the Central Valley. With his appointment as Speaker of the Assembly, he now gained access to be informed on the progress of the planning the institution (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). On one occasion, Bustamante and other elected officials representing the Central Valley advocated for special funding for an

environmental review of the site finalists (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). The need for the environmental review had been used by the UC Office of the President as a stalling mechanism in the process of the site selection, with the lack of money no longer a viable excuse the process had to continue. At a UC Board of Regents meeting in May of 1995, the selection was finally made; the city of Merced would be the location of the tenth research university. The viability of water would come up as a reason for not choosing a site in Madera County as there was uncertainty regarding agricultural water rights (Wallace, 1995). The advocacy and organizing that occurred by the constituents in the Merced community who called themselves “University Committee of Merced” along with state and federal politicians provided constant pressure to bring the institution to Merced. One strategy that was used included “having six thousand area school children send postcards to the regents, each conveying the writer’s sentiment about the importance of a new UC campus to the region” (Desrochers, 2007, p. 30).

Despite the location of the campus being selected, the UC system still needed to find \$400 million to fund the building of the institution. As the other research institutions in the state dealt with budget issues, the development of the new institution took a low priority for the President Atkinson. In 1997, with no appointment of a Chancellor for the new campus and other administrative positions hired, Assemblyman Bustamante again became frustrated with the lack of progress. Conversations between President Atkinson and Assemblyman Bustamante would eventually lead Assemblyman Dennis Cardoza to act as a negotiator and an agreement was soon made. The agreement would ensure that UC Merced would not be included in the UC system budget. Instead, UC Merced would

become a separate line in the governor's budget (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). This deal would eventually ease the concerns of the other nine UC Chancellor's regarding the diversion of funds. However, this also meant that UC Merced would deal with the effects of the economy from 1995 to the opening of its doors.

In 1997, a statewide higher education bond measure was passed that included funding for the new UC campus. This meant that the planning process for the institution could be accelerated. This occurred largely due to the bipartisan support from the Central Valley representatives (Desrochers, 2007). A chancellor for UC Merced would be appointed by the UC Regents in 1999. Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, who had previously worked in the UC system office and was active in the process, would bring together an executive team that would help establish the university (Desrochers, 2007). One of the first positions filled was the Vice Chancellor for University Advancement (VCUA). The first task of the VCUA was to select regional and state leaders in both public and private sectors that would comprise the newly formed UC Merced Foundation Board. The Board of Trustees would be 102 members and they would assist in fundraising and advocating for the campus. In 2001, local benefactors had already endowed seven faculty chairs (Trombley & Irving, 2001).

The campus of the 21st century would not only face the political and economic issues in order for it to come to fruition but once the UC Merced leadership was given the green light to create the institution it would once again face obstacles. The lines of flight of enrollment projections, an undereducated and underserved Central Valley, and the California Master Plan for Higher Education would all intrasect to create the UC Merced

assemblage. The UC Merced assemblage altered the UC system assemblage with the creation of an additional campus. The 10th campus would allow the UC system to, once again, boost the number of eligible Californians enrolled while also disrupting who and what would be considered a UC campus. The *becoming* of the UC system assemblage and UC Merced assemblage are entangled, they are dependent on each other. UC Merced would come to represent the UC's attempt to build a campus that was influenced by the shifting priorities of decrease funding from the state to the responsibility of the student and the domain of the private sector.

Fairy Shrimp and Free Land

After Assemblyman Bustamante and other Central Valley elected officials successfully lobbied and secured funding for the environmental impact reports for all three potential locations, the decision on the tenth campus was made public. In 1995, the UC Regents finally selected a site six miles north of the city of Merced. The University Committee of Merced used editorial board meetings, postcard campaigns, and individual meetings with Regents to advocate for Merced to be the next UC campus. It was through this advocacy work that the committee was able to secure donated land for campus.

An enticing part of the site selection process was the ability for the University Committee of Merced to arrange an offer of free land from the Virginia Smith Trust. The Virginia Smith Trust, a nonprofit that provides scholarships to local students, also owned land in the northeast of the city of Merced. The committee created brochures that explained the partnership and donated land (Anderson, 2017). However, this

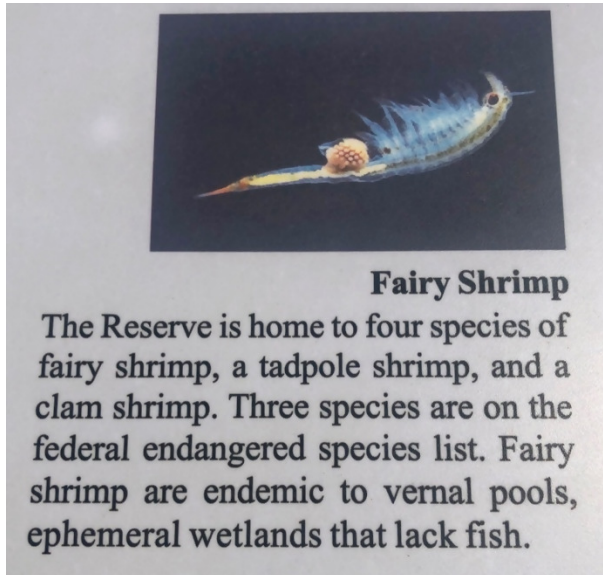


Figure 1. Fairy Shrimp

would not be a simple transaction, fairy shrimp would come to derail plans. As humans we often think of place as an enclosed and humanized space (Tuan, 1977). It is space that is “a calm center of established values” (Tuan, 1977, p. 54). For the fairy shrimp, whose home is seasonal vernal pools, the habitat, where they thrive, was now the land that enclosed by UC Merced.

Vernal pools are springs that emerge from the depressions of land where there is clay harden soil, despite the Central Valley prospering off the land through agriculture, the land that was donated to UC was the exact opposite. It was home for fairy shrimp,



which range from an inch to 1.5 inches (Buhler & Pascal, 2001) that thrive off the winter rains and where other

Figure 2. Vernal Pools and Grassland Reserve informational board on campus

animals and plant species adapted to the wetlands. The vernal pools only exist on land that is not disturbed by humans. The tiny fairy shrimp became listed as endangered species after the UC Board of Regents had decided on Merced. The presence of fairy shrimp caused administration to relocate where campus would be located in order to minimize the damage done to the vernal pools. The institution faced organized resistance from two groups that testified at legislative hearings and filed multiple lawsuits to stop the building of campus (Desrochers, 2011). However, working with environmental specialists, a decision was made to relocate campus, by doing this 90% of the vernal pools would not be disturbed and campus went from 2,000 acres to 910 (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). The relocation of campus also meant that portions of the land was not a

part of the Virginia Smith Trust, which meant the loss of potential scholarships and donations. According to founding Chancellor Tomlinson-Keasey (2007), “the regents knew that families in the San Joaquin Valley would have a difficult time funding their children’s education; hence the fact that development of trust land around the campus would add to the scholarships was a factor in final site selection” (p. 22). The dilemma of the land would be solved by a local framer who agreed to sell land adjacent to the relocated campus

site for
community
development.

The
relocation of
campus, and the
adjacent land sold
by the local
farmer, did not
solve all
problems. In the
fall of 2000, the
UC system had
yet to officially
own the promised

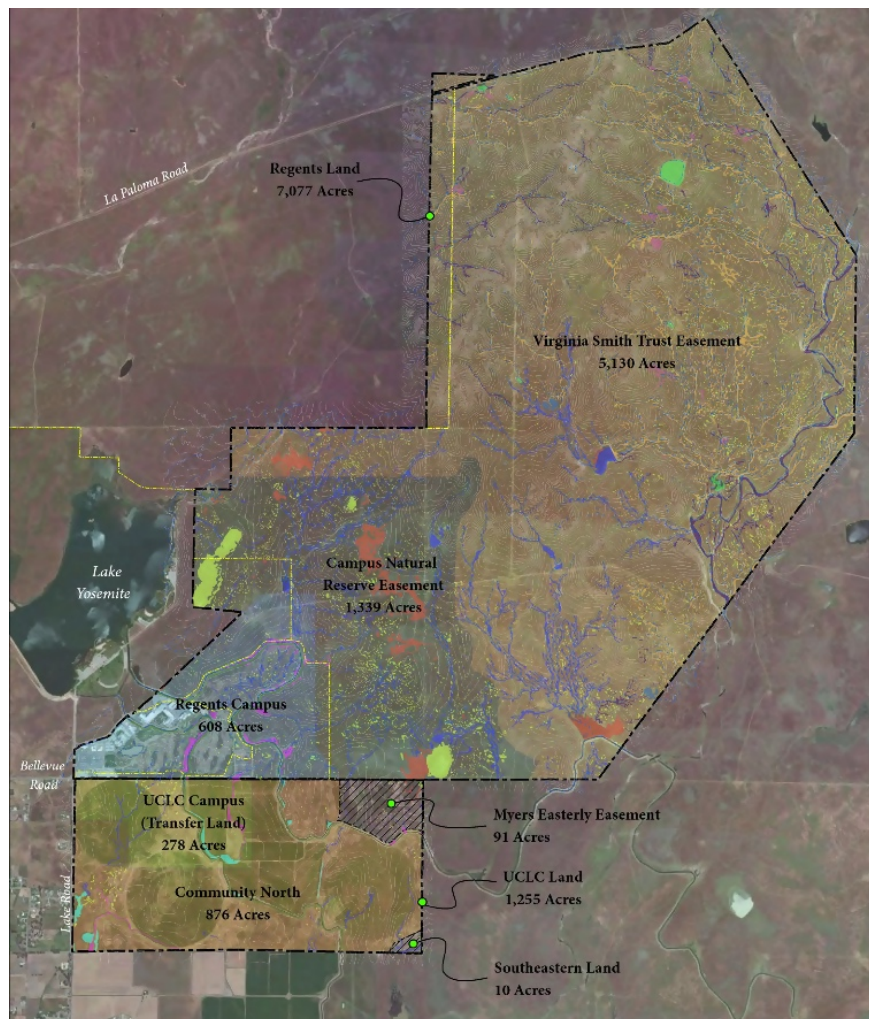


Figure 3. Map of land ownership surrounding UC Merced. Courtesy of UC Merced

free land from the Virginia Smith Trust. The land that would be acquired from the Virginia Smith Trust was the current golf course that was owned by the trust, which was financially costing the Trust more money. Ultimately, the Chancellor worked with the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to develop a grant to invest in securing the reserved land for vernal pools and the construction of UC Merced. With the funds from this grant, the 7,300-acre Virginia Smith Trust land would be granted to the UC system (Desrochers, 2011). The land would create a natural preserve of almost 6,000 acres. The additional money from the grant would be allocated to scholarships administered by the Trust (Desrochers, 2011). The land that was purchased from the rancher would be jointly owned by the UC and Virginia Smith Trust. This would be the establishment of a private-public partnership (P3s). The land would transition to the UC Regents in March of 2002 and construction would begin in September of that year (Desrochers, 2011). In late 2003, the Merced community would start to see the framing of campus buildings from the distant road known as Lake Road. Lake road would serve as the primary road to reach campus.



Figure 4. Aerial shot of construction on UC Merced in 2004

Intermission: Home of the Ten Percent

There are multiple ways to get to the main entrance of UC Merced, depending on where one lives. For people who do not live in Merced, they drive on Highway 99 and take the Campus Way exit and those that live in the city of Merced they drive up either Bellevue or Yosemite. All these roads will lead you to Lake Road and the brand new

four-way light stop. It does not matter which way you travel; one thing is the same: you will see fields and



Figure 5. Intersection of Bellevue Rd and N. Lake Rd.

cows. As you approach the intersection and wait for the new traffic signal to turn green, you immediately know that there is something different about this campus. It is not like other University of California institutions. You might not be able to figure out instantly what makes this campus different. At first glance, you might think well it looks new and it is in the middle of nowhere. The campus buildings are not from the 1880s or even the 1990s. The buildings are modern and the sounds of drilling, hammering, and cranes operating tell your ears that it is not yet finished being built. However, that is not what makes this institution unique, something is different, but it is not quite apparent what that difference is.

This is my experience every time I arrive at UC Merced; it is a campus that is constantly deterritorializing and reterritorializing itself to the point that one might argue that the assemblage itself does not know if it is completely stabilized. In the span of three



Figure 6. Construction fence in 2016

academic years that I have been coming to this campus, every time I arrive, the physical campus landscape has changed. I have seen dirt turn into parking lots, grassy areas converted to construction sites, and new buildings open. Construction fences have gone up and been taken down. The campus has been under construction since it opened its

doors. Yet, the one thing that has remained constant is the surrounding fields and the cows.



Figure 7. Students walking on Scholar's Lane

As the light turns green, I take a right towards Bellevue and Lake Lot. This lot is designated for students and visitors. I expect that it will take time to find a parking spot. After years of experience being on a college campus, I have learned one must

always arrive to campus early if you want a good parking spot. 'There are not enough parking spaces,' is common for students to say about every college campus; however, this time it really does feel this way, since previous parking lots have now turned into a construction company onsite office. One student mentioned that "I have a ritual now, I just pray to the parking Gods right when I'm at the light and hope that I can get a spot in less than ten minutes. That is the goal." I enter the parking lot and make several trips down the lanes; I begin to recognize the same cars passing me in the hunt for a parking space. There are a few parking spaces open but they are located at the end of the lot towards the construction site and, if you park there, you are adding another ten minutes to your walk up 'the hill.' I can see students faces with their look of urgency and worriedness trying to find a parking spot, those looks increase every time I encounter the students circling looking for spots. Finally, after about 15 minutes, students are arriving

from the academic core of campus to their cars to leave campus. I was able to find a parking space that would not increase my travel time to the academic core of campus.

Walking up Scholars Lane commonly known as ‘the hill’, the students I pass are indicators to me that something is different. This time, however, I am actually able to name why this campus is different, especially compared to other UC institutions. I am walking with UC Merced students as they head from either the Lake Lot or the residential area up to the academic core of the campus. The faces at this institution are brown, everywhere you look it is not hard to find a student of color. As I walk through campus, I hear a variety of different languages being spoken. UC Merced is different because the student body of this campus is not what has been deemed ‘normative’ at a research-intensive institution. At UC Merced, over 80% of students on campus identify as a student of color. The UC Merced student body demographics breakdown includes 54.7% Latinx, 20% Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.5% African-American, 3.2% two or more races, less than 1% Native American, and 9.6% white (University of California Merced, n.d.a.) In the fall of 2018, 26% of the all students enrolled in the UC system identified as a student of color (University of California, n.d.). Only UC Riverside has a significant number of students of color at 42%, followed by Santa Cruz 30%, Santa Barbara 28%, Irvine 26%, Los Angeles 24%, Davis 24%, San Diego 20%, San Francisco 20%, and Berkley 17% (University of California, n.d.).

The California Master Plan territorializes research institutions by mandating that it will admit the top 12.5 percent of high school students in the state into one of the ten campuses (California State Department of Education, 1960). While the majority of the

research institutions within the system remain predominately white, UC Merced does not fall under this norm. Walking through campus you are certain to come across brown faces. However, the majority of those brown faces are students, not staff, faculty, or administration. UC Merced faculty are majority white (49.6%) while faculty of color make up 34.4% and 16.1% are unknown or nonresident. The same goes for staff at UC Merced, 39.1% identifying as a person of color compared to 42% of staff being white, while 15.1% of the staff race and ethnicity is unknown (UC Merced, n.d.c.). The senior management of UC Merced is 100% white.

Currently 11% of California's population is located in the Central Valley and yet only the student and staff demographic reflect the Valley's Latinx population. The Central Valley is made up of eight counties with the demographic makeup being 68% white, 50.2% Latinx, 0.32% Native Hawaiian/Asian, 4.7% Black, and 1.0% American Indian/Alaska Native. The faculty and senior management are only reflective of the Central Valley not the student population. That is what makes this UC campus different than other institutions within the system. UC Merced is reflective of the growing Latinx population in the state however, administration and faculty lag behind in representation. It is noticeable when you interact with faculty, staff or administration and it is something students constantly mentioned.

What is a Hispanic-Serving Institution?

In 2010, just five years after opening the doors for instruction, UC Merced became a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). As the California legislature was debating the need for a tenth campus in the UC system and dealing with the state economic

rollercoaster, nationally the discussion focused on the participation rates for Latinxs in higher education. Since the early 1980s, Latinx advocates had been discussing the importance and need to increase access for Latinxs students in higher education. In Congress, various bills would be introduced to create a the HSI designation which would allocate federal funding to higher education institutions that enrolled 25 percent of Latinxs students; however, each bill would eventually die in their respective assigned committees (Calderón Galdeano, Flores, & Moder, 2012).

The Higher Education Act of 1965 was up for reauthorization in 1992 and discussions on introducing legislation on HSIs were occurring among the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and members of Congress. HACU had established a strong alliance among members of Congress in order to formally recognize institutions that had high enrollment rates of Latinxs as HSIs (Espino & Cheslock, 2012). Passing in 1992, the HSI designation would be defined as an institution that has an enrollment of at least 25 percent Latinx undergraduate enrollment and a Latinx undergraduate population of 75 percent that are first-generation to attend college and low-income (Espino & Cheslock, 2012). This version of requirements would only be in place for five years before the reauthorization of HEA would occur again. The reauthorization of the HEA in 1998 eased the requirements of HSI status to only require 25 percent of Latinx undergraduate enrollment and 50 percent low-income (Devaris, 2000; Espino & Cheslock, 2012). Along with this change in requirements, the creation of a separate Title V Part A, ‘Developing Hispanic-Serving Institution Programs’ (DHSIP) would occur (Espino & Cheslock, 2012).

HSIs as a federal designation differs dramatically from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as these designations are a permanent classification for an institution; HSI status is a provisional classification based on meeting the percentage criteria and cost per student. When an institution meets the 25% criteria and cost per student, they become eligible to apply for competitive grants under Title V (Espino & Cheslock, 2012). Despite the enactment of the HSI federal designation in 1992, funding allocations for the designation did not occur until 1995 (Santiago & Brown, 2004; Calderón Galdeano et al., 2012). To be eligible for Title V Part A DHSIP funding, institutions must have lower expenditures than other institutions that offer similar instruction, financial need among student body, and a Latinx undergraduate student body to which 50 percent are low-income, which is 150 percent of the poverty level defined by the Census Bureau (Allen, 2006; Espino & Cheslock, 2012).

Historically, public higher education institutions have relied on various sources of revenue such as state and federal allocations, research grants, and private donations to maintain affordability and provide a valued education (Ortega, Nellumn, Kamimura, & Vidal-Rodriguez, 2015). However, financial resources for institutions of higher education have been significantly reduced in past decades, forcing institutions to do more with less (Ortega et al., 2015). The same is true for institutions that are designated HSIs and other Minority-Serving Institutions. According to Ortega et al. (2015), few studies have examined how HSIs mediate fiscal challenges. Historically, HSIs have been under-resourced, which has redirected resources away from programs and practices that are

proven effective to recruit, retain, and graduate students (Núñez, Hurtado, & Calderón Galdeano, 2015). The designation of HSIs has allowed for institutions that meet certain criteria to apply for an array of grant opportunities under Title V. The number of higher education institutions that have been designated an HSI has grown to 523 since the designation creation in 1992 (Excellencia in Education, 2019). However, as the growth of HSIs has continued to expand, federal allocations of Title V funds has not kept up with the growth trend, despite the expansion of various grants and programs. According to Santiago, Taylor, and Calderón (2016), Title V grants an average \$510,000 and most HSIs have an operating budget of over \$20 million. This roughly translates to approximately 1-2% of the institutional annual budget.

In 1995, when the legislature first allocated the funds for Title V (e.g. Developing HSIs Program), a total of \$12 million was allotted and roughly 37 Title V grants were given to institutions (Santiago et al., 2016). The number of institutions that qualify for HSI Title V Part A funding reached its peak in 2004 at 185 institutions, which is roughly 70% of all HSIs that were eligible for funding that year, and the number of grants awarded has steadily declined year after year. For example, in 2009, only 163 institutions received Title V funding and only increased slightly from 1999 at \$407,487 to \$600,000 in 2007 (Ortega et al., 2015). Institutions that receive HSI designation typically are underfunded per student. The federal per student funding allocations at these institutions is typically 66 cents for every dollar. Therefore, making Title V grants even more competitive among institutions (Núñez et al., 2015). HSIs, on average in 2010, were more dependent on government sources for revenue than non-HSIs which make them

vulnerable as state and federal funding continue to decline (Ortega et al., 2015). Title V grant funding has been in existence for more than 20 years and the majority of funds have been invested in faculty and curriculum development, student support services, and administrative management (Santiago et al., 2016).

The U.S. Department of Education in 2008 released new awards available to HSIs under Title III (Part F) program for areas in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) (Ortega, et al., 2015). The results of this expansion of funds created significant increase for institutions. Awards for Part F program averaged nearly \$1.2 million per institution annually in 2008 and 2009 (Ortega et al., 2015). Despite the increase in awards, nearly half of eligible HSIs did not receive any Title V grant awards in 2009 (Ortega et al., 2015). It is also important to note that Title V funding is not restricted to just serving Latinx students, but it is open for all students attending the institution (Brown, Santiago, & Lopez, 2003).

The expansion of the different Title V and Title III awards has provided HSIs with some financial assistance in times of fiscal restraints; however, the continued disinvestment by state governments raises concerns for the long-term investment of initiatives that are designed to support the postsecondary success of Latinx students (Ortega et al., 2015). Approximately 50% of all HSIs receive at least one Title V grant funding between fiscal year 1994 and fiscal year 2014 (Santiago et al., 2016). However, the continued expansion of HSIs across the nation can potentially exacerbate the uncertain status of Title V grant funding since regional and national economies will affect the demand and availability of funds.

Despite the uncertainty of federal funding, Santiago et al. (2016) has demonstrated that the funding has indeed helped expand opportunities for Latinx college students. The two main purposes behind Title V funding is for institutions to

expand educational opportunities for and improve the academic attainment of Hispanic students, and to expand and enhance the academic offerings, programs, and institutional stability of colleges and universities that are educating the majority of Hispanic college students. (Santiago et al., 2016, p. 13)

HSIs are diverse institutional types, they can be two-year and four-year private and public institutional types. When the designation was first created, the majority of institutions that received the designation were community colleges and regional comprehensive institutions. However, recently there has been a desire from research institutions to gain the designation status. The UC system currently has six campus that have received the HSI designation, the first campus to do so was Riverside (2008) followed by Merced (2010), Santa Cruz (2012), Santa Barbara (2015), Irvine (2017), and most recently Davis (2019). It will only be matter of time before the entire UC undergraduate campuses are designated as an HSI, as more Latinx students are earning high school diplomas with 39% of them meeting the course requirements for admissions to a UC (Gordon, 2018). UC Merced has the largest enrollment of Latinx students within the UC system, it is important to see how the UC Merced assemblage continues to incorporate the HSI line of flight within the assemblage.

Preparing to Serve

Once looked upon as a well-funded public system, the UC system is now more reliant on student tuition and private-public partnerships. For example, Desrochers (2011) states that the system “holds little promise for economically challenges students” (p. 16).

The institution of the 21st century was built not on the idea of serving the demographic needs of the Central Valley as is often said when you are on campus. Just spend a day on campus and you are bound to hear the phrases, ‘we are here to serve the Central Valley’, ‘our students represent the Central Valley’, ‘we are making a difference in the Central Valley’. However, documents by the Postsecondary Education Commission report “*Opening the Central Valley*” states that the decision and support to build an institution in the Valley is not based on the regional needs but rather the statewide enrollment projections and the physical capacity (CPEC, 1996). The rationale to build a new institution of the 21st century is indicative of the enrollment projections of statewide participation in the UC system. However, one cannot read projection demographics and not take into consideration the projected growth of ethnic and racial demographics that are occurring throughout the state. In 2014, Latinxs became the largest minority group in the state (Pazar, 2015; Freeling, 2015). The assemblage of the UC system has, up until recently, been majority white. The HSI designation as a line of flight has started to deterritorialize the UC assemblage. One can see this with more UC institutions being vocal about plans to become an HSI, recently UC Berkeley Chancellor Christ announce plans to become an HSI by 2028 (Levitan, 2018).

The UC Merced assemblage has immersed itself into the larger UC assemblage, a simple google search of the institution will result in the institutions U.S. World rankings, social media pages, and news articles regarding the institutions research, student demographics, and campus construction. These results have demonstrated that, although not initially being wanted by other UC institutions, UC Merced has started to become a

model for research institutions that seek to gain the status and notoriety of educating Latinx students within the UC system. For example, the BestColleges website ranked UC Merced 11th among the institutions that best serve Latinxs (Freeling, 2015). The entire UC system has seen a growth in Latinx enrollment in just a decade by two-thirds. The UC system assemblage is responding to the demographic shift line of flight by increasing the number of institutions that are HSIs yet each of these assemblages are responding in different ways.

What is our story? Is more than just the title of this section but a phrase that is often asked to students, staff, and professors. This inquiry sees the UC Merced story as an assemblage that emerged out of the legacy of the UC system and intrasects with the Central Valley, politics, economics, and the lives of Latinx students who attend the institution. Often times, when the word story is evoked there is connotation that the story is over that time and space are sealed. However, the UC Merced story is far from over. It is in constant flow that is shaped by various lines of flight from the creation of the HSI designation, the UC enrollment projections, the California demographic populations shift, and the eventual creation and opening of UC Merced. The ability to transform the UC Merced assemblage continues through the physical design of the campus landscape. While campus landscapes is often thought of as a neutral space, *Constructing the Landscape* will demonstrate how the campus landscape functions as an assemblage and is not a neutral space but rather a space with multiple outcomes.

Part Three: Constructing the Landscape

The Architectural Assemblage

A campus does not inhere naturally in a place. It does not cause buildings to exist. It is simply the formal name for the set of conditioning relations that, when arranged together, create a campus landscape. These relations create institutions of higher education as sites that produce and naturalize myths and ideologies that systematically disorganize and neutralize experiences, especially for underrepresented students



Figure 8. UC Merced Construction in January 2019
Courtesy: Merced2020 Instagram

(McCarthy, 1998). The landscape of campus provides information, ideas, and instructions about the planning and design of the

green environment that represents, serves, and symbolizes higher education (Dober, 2000). Campus landscapes have been overlooked in how they (re)produce inequalities on

campus. Yet, the physical features of campus provide a prospective student and their families with the first impression of campus (Thelin & Yankovich, 1987). It is the heterogeneous elements of education, buildings, and design plans that create relational lines connecting the buildings into a campus landscape. All assemblages, like campus planning and design, have emergent systems that were caused by intractions between parts that exercise their own abilities. A campus landscape is an assemblage of assemblages, otherwise nested assemblages, meaning that they move from parts to a whole. I do not seek to tell you what assemblages are but rather what they do. In this



Figure 9. Scholar's Lane walkway located between Kolligian Library and Quad

section, I will focus on how emergent systems of architectural design seek to define the UC Merced experience by focusing on what the architectural assemblage accomplishes and the consequences and implications of such assemblage.

The architecture of campus is a vital element in the relational lines of the UC Merced assemblage, as it provides the dimensional form of the institution. It shapes the open spaces as it defines the uniqueness of the campus and how it is operationalized. For example, Figure 9, demonstrates how the open space of the Scholar's Lane walkway is

used for tabling. It is often thought that most campus work is done inside the architectural confines of campus (Chapman, 2006). The position of buildings determines the movement patterns of the campus terrain and the ways gathering occurs. The layout of buildings contributes to the way a campus functions and how it is experienced by students, staff, faculty, and community members. It is the materiality of campus that is often ignored, and preference is given to the human experience without the acknowledgement that there are material and symbolic elements that contribute to assemblages, in this case the UC Merced assemblage. Assemblages are composed of heterogenous components; therefore, we must look beyond the actants that inhabit the campus and include the material and symbolic artifacts that constitute the assemblage. This means focusing on the architecture of the buildings, the tools and machines, the parking lots, walkways, and the symbolic icons that express the materiality of campus.

Every component of an assemblage has its own historical identity (DeLanda, 2006) and the architectural design of a campus is no different. As previously mentioned, UC Merced is expanding the physical campus landscape and this transformation has been well-documented by the institution. Numerous campus design documents have been developed throughout the design and planning phases of the campus. All these documents have been informed by various stakeholders identified by the institution: donors, UC system, undergraduate and graduate students, alumni, university administration, faculty, staff, community, and industry (UC Merced, 2016). These documents are part of the planning and development process for the 2020 project and beyond. Various iterations of planning documents have been created in order to meet the funding allocations from the

state and the creation of private public partnerships (P3s). The UC Merced assemblage as a whole occurred due to the various parts interacting with each other. “*What is Our Story?*” discussed the multiplicity of lines of flight that produced creation of the campus. Therefore, this section will not focus on the financial or historical contexts of the campus planning process but rather campus landscape design functions as a component of the assemblage. The architectural assemblage is the bounded geographical area of UC Merced assemblage but through its materiality it also functions as content and expression. This section will focus on how the architectural assemblage interacts with the larger UC Merced assemblage. In order to see how the components, attempt to create an institutional experience that seeks to stabilize the architectural assemblage; while also producing the *becoming* of the institutional agent and Latinx student.

Designs plans. For a structure to be built, design plans must be created by an architect to ensure that needs of the client are met. The basic principles that inform the skeleton of the plan are grounded in the discipline of architecture. Expansion planning includes a design program that seeks to inform the campus constituents to the developments that will be made to campus and their financial implications. Dober, a prominent architect in the field, states that “having those affected by design outcomes involved in the description of project goals, objectives, is a meaningful distribution of responsibility” (2000, p. 59). Design programs should be developed and informed by long range development plans that demonstrate how campus landscapes should be used. A design program for a campus project is a document that informs and guides the design team. The program designers should know the general goals and objectives, requirements

and expectations, site history, and account for opportunities to sustain and support the local rituals and values. The program should also be directly linked to campus master plans. The direct link to campus master plans informs how the campus landscape is designed; however, campus master plans do not evolve in the same way that other campus guiding documents do. For instance, documents such as the campus strategic plans, which address more current issues such as demographic shifts, are typically considered ‘living’ documents that are reevaluated over time.

Building a campus in the 21st century is not starting from a blank slate, it is influenced by various nested assemblages such as the legacy of the higher education system it belongs to, the current national, regional, and local economic and political climate, the regional and state population, and the influence of neoliberalism in higher education (e.g. “economic rationalism that reduces all human dimensions, social relations, and activities into a consumer exchange” (Mullen, Samie, Brindley, English, & Carr, 2013, p. 188). Neoliberalism is always transforming and transitioning depending on the context. For example, neoliberalism has shaped the responses of administration by redesigning current buildings to fit the needs of the 21st century student. Often, the library is the first building on campus that is remodeled; for example, at UC Merced, books are taken to offsite locations or replaced with a digital format to make space for areas where students can study, recharge, and areas for collaboration (Watanabe, 2017). The design plans of UC Merced are a nested set of assemblages, such as the historical legacy of the University of California system, the discipline of architecture, institutional academic goals, and various other components. It is these components that come to shape and

inform the creation of the 21st century campus. These nested assemblages are acknowledged in a variety of planning documents. The next section will provide an insight into how the nested assemblages are contributing to shaping the UC Merced assemblage and the experience for Latinx students.

Designing the 21st century campus. As mentioned in *What is Our Story*, the concept and eventual creation of UC Merced occurred long before the ground breaking of campus in the early 2000s. The historical assemblages did not cease to exist, rather, it has become lines of flight in the architectural assemblage. Various planning documents mention how UC Merced will come to be incorporated into the University of California system, the state, regionally, and locally. For instance, the *Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP)*, provides a comprehensive land use plan for institutional growth. The LRDP is influenced by the Strategic Academic Focusing Initiative (SAFI) which identifies target distribution of faculty among the Schools of Engineering, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences and Humanities and the Arts (SSHA). In addition, the SAFI has identified six interdisciplinary thematic areas: a sustainable planet, computational science and data analytics, adaptive and functional matter, entrepreneurship and management, human health science, and inequality, power, and social justice (UC Merced, 2014b). When UC Merced first opened its doors in the heart of the state’s rapidly growing Central Valley with “the ambitious mission to establish a world-class university focused on teaching, research, and public service” (UC Merced, 2013, p. 7), it sought to distinguish itself from the other UC institutions through its academic offerings and campus design to encompass the interdisciplinary possibilities of

the 21st century. While the *LRPD* serves as a guide for campus planners, faculty, and administrators the document is informed by the academic goals, available resources, and the evolving priorities of the institution. This document was created shortly after the opening of campus and encompasses the nested set of assemblages that shapes the creation of campus. The *LRPD* uses a land framework that allows for the usage of campus to be flexible and efficient. At the core of the planning is the ability for combination of horizontal and vertical mixed-use developments that would meet the campus programmatic needs. Vertical mixed-use development combines different uses within the same building; whereas, horizontal consist of single use building. When

combining horizontal and vertical mixed-use buildings, they create a complementary and integrated walkable campus.



Figure 10. On the right is Granite Pass building and to the left is building construction for the second delivery in Fall 2019

Figure 10 is a

picture of one mixed-used buildings. Granite Pass has residential spaces on the second and third floor, while the first floor is composed of Student Life offices and classrooms.

The approach to building out the campus by UC Merced administration has focused on designing a campus by the utilization of spaces instead of specific academic

disciplines per building, like traditional American higher education institutions. This has also led to UC Merced moving non-academic administration to the downtown campus center. These are student affairs professionals who do not interact frequently with faculty or students (UC Merced, n.d.d.). The move to the downtown office building is a way administration has stated it will enhance the mission of engaging the local community and participating in the economic wellbeing of the city and region. As higher education institutions continue to deal with state disinvestment one of the responses by institutions is to move away from single-use facilities to mixed-use campus spaces in order to meet growing enrollment and compete with other institutions. One of the major goals of the 2020 project “is to create a collaborative, mixed-use research and educational environment for students, faculty, and staff” (UC Merced, 2014a, p. 6). Breaking with traditional layouts of campus design (e.g. assign disciplines to buildings), UC Merced campus seeks to develop a campus landscape that is informed by public and private universities and commercial developments that focus on collaborative living and working environments (UC Merced, 2009). In order to accomplish this landscape design, UC Merced had to enter into a private-public partnership. Interest in private public partnerships (P3) is rapidly growing for higher education institutional construction and renovation projects. P3s are new ways in which institutions can fund new developments without acquiring public debt. Traditionally used for student housing projects, P3s relationships are growing in other types of expansion projects (Romor, 2018).

The design goals of the 2020 project seek to utilize the existing infrastructure, create mixed-use facilities, have a triple zero sustainability goals, amenities for 10,000 students, a front door of campus, and open space network and public realm for the campus environment (UC Merced, 2014a). These design goals are building upon the idea of sustainable placemaking where all elements, even the edges of development, are equal elements of the plan to shape the campus culture and identity (UC Merced, 2014a).

Administration has grounded the entire 2020 project on activity-based programming which encourages interaction among students, faculty, and staff that will allow for



Figure 11. Picture taken from Pavilion facing the two mixed-use buildings

interdisciplinary collaboration. The UC Merced assemblage as a territory is both physical and discursive. The spatial boundaries the UC Merced campus possess the physical territory of the campus where learning, research, and living occurs.

Traditionally the creation of design determinants and design taxonomy are seen as pragmatic opportunities to create a campus design that functions and meets the goals of the plan (Dober, 2000). For instance, Dober (2000) created design determinants and design taxonomy components that are pragmatic rather than theoretical as a taxonomy of

opportunity. The thirty items on the taxonomy have distinguishable characteristics that impact and result in the design determinants (Dober, 2000). The list of thirteen factors of design determinants influence how a campus can design their landscapes (Dober, 2000). These determinants range from climate, vegetation, environs, to the allocation of funds (Dober, 2000). The design taxonomy covers areas such as campus roads, surroundings, heritage spaces, and seating (Dober, 2000). The interactions of the determinants and landscape design function to inform how the distinctive physical features of the campus will be established through planning and design routines (Dober, 2000). However, when theorizing campus designs as an assemblage, the roads, open spaces, location of key buildings, natural environments, and iconic aspects of landscape function as relational lines that are situated within a campus design plan to create the desired UC Merced



Figure 12. Recycle, Compost, and Landfill bins are located throughout campus

experience.

An assemblage refers to connections, complex flows, and *becomings* that emerge and disperse relationally between systems of elements (Kennedy, Zapasnik, McCann, & Bruce, 2013).

Assemblages are dynamic, adaptive, fluid, and an ongoing process. DeLanda (2016)

conceptualizes assemblages as

having three relational features that are in constant relationship with each other. The first is a system of elements that function as both the content and the expression of the assemblage. For example, UC Merced design plans serve as the content and expression of the UC Merced assemblage, as they seek to create a normative experience of the campus. It is through the placement of buildings and walkways in certain locations of campus that the assemblage is identifying to Latinx students what the institution values. One example of this is how the institution values sustainability and it is expressed through the materiality of recycle bins located throughout campus and the strategic plan for sustainability to be a triple zero campus (see Figure 12). This means the campus will have “zero net energy, generation zero landfill waste, and zero greenhouse emissions by 2020” (UC Merced, 2017, p. 3). The second is the acknowledgement of what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) and DeLanda (2016) have named the deterritorialization and reterritorialization which functions as a spatial boundary but is also the components of an assemblage that have been drawn together. For instance, campus maps serve to denote the spatial boundary but also bring together other components of the UC Merced assemblage such as buildings, walkways, and greenery. The last relational feature is the material components of the assemblage, which provides insights and impressions of a world that is constantly *becoming*. *Becoming* is the process of change within the assemblage that brings about new possibilities. When the UC Merced assemblage is deterritorialized it seeks to gain stability by reterritorializing itself and produces new *becomings*.

The UC Merced design plans bases its components on activity-based programming, where space is assigned based on function rather than positions or organizational charts. The intention of the 2020 project is to break down the silos that are found in higher education institutions in order to make a campus that is holistic, supports learning and living, and supports faculty and student interaction and interdisciplinary research (UC Merced, n.d.e.). In order to accomplish this the 2020 project focuses on usages of space rather than academic buildings. The goal is to create spaces that will be able to carry out the mission and growth of the institution, this has meant that administration has made decisions informed by “contemporary thought from other public and private universities and commercial developments around design, urban fabric, collaborative living and learning, working, and facility operations” (UC Merced, n.d.e., p. 16). These decisions have shifted from traditional campus landscapes that assign buildings by organizational chart but rather conceptualizes spaces as their ability to maximize usage.

Intermission: The Sights and Sounds of Campus

What are the sounds of a campus? Have you ever sat down and just listened to what sounds surround you when you are on campus? Sitting outside in the heart of the UC Merced campus, you can hear laughter, various conversations held in languages others than English, and footsteps moving in all directions. The sounds of UC Merced draw actants into the assemblage of the campus and entangles them with the materiality of the construction around them. One can either see the fences or hear the sounds of banging, clatter, buzzing, and drilling indicating that construction is occurring.

It is a bright sunny day and all throughout campus students are walking in and out of buildings, going to class, meeting up with friends, walking to campus jobs, and getting situated for the new academic year. For returning students, a new part of campus that has been hiding behind the black chain-link fence has now made its grand debut. New students do not know a life before this building existed, they might have seen the black chain-link



Figure 13. Walkway to Pavilion, Granite, and Glacier Buildings

fence during a campus tour or preview days, but their UC Merced experience starts with the opening of three new mixed-used buildings. As I walk from the heart of campus towards the student neighborhoods, I am behind two Latinas that are making their way towards the Pavilion, the new dining hall, I hear them say:

Stephanie: *What building is that? (Pointing to the Pavilion)*

Veronica: *The new dining hall, that's where we are meeting Leticia.*

Stephanie: *Why does it feel like I am freshman again, I don't even know campus anymore. I kind of miss that fence now. (As she points to where the fence once was.) Oh, but look you can see Little Lake again.*

Both laugh as they walk past the fence that separates students, faculty, and staff from the



Figure 14. Construction of the second delivery phase, scheduled to be complete by Fall 2019

construction hazards and the construction workers. The fence serves as a physical barrier between the workers and the

UC Merced community, in some ways signifying to the workers you are allowed to be here but only if you stay in certain areas. As we walk towards the Pavilion, the new dining hall (see Figure 13), the Latinas become inaudible as their voices are drowned out by sounds of construction. All I hear now as I approach the Pavilion are sounds of jackhammers and welding machines finishing the new building that will have new classrooms, labs, and faculty office space (see figure 14). The sounds of students attempting to talk to each other over the construction noise fills the open walkway as we approach the dining hall.



Figure 15. Pavilion outside seating area

The materiality of the campus is being captured through the sounds of the materials used for the construction of buildings. For Stephanie, the chain-link fence had become her normal UC Merced experience. Being separated from the construction materials and the construction workers had become the norm, she had come to know that fence as part of her everyday encounters. However, there have been times when the materiality of construction could not be contained by a fence. For example, there have been a few instances on campus when labor unions have picketed the UC system and the Merced campus due to contract disputes. In these cases, Latinx students joined the labor unions on the picket line in support. These were the moment in which I witnessed the interaction of Latinx students with construction workers, many of these construction workers also identified as Latinx.

As I walked behind Stephanie and Veronica, I came to listen to the sounds of campus. The sounds of construction that fill the open space from all directions, not just the area near the dining hall. The entire campus is under construction; everywhere I look I can see cranes, fences, and other machines that are building campus. These machines and other materiality on campus are the expression of the architectural assemblage that seeks to be a cost-effective development that continues to invest in the existing campus infrastructure, while providing a dynamic living and learning environment. As I sat down

in front of the Pavilion (see Figure 15) and began to think with theory in order to conceptualize what the sounds of the assemblages were trying to accomplish. The sounds became the materiality representing the neoliberalism of higher education. As previously mentioned, neoliberalism can take on many forms depending on the context. When I began to listen to the sounds of campus, I expected to hear the voices of students engaging in conversations about social plans or studying, instead, I heard the sounds of construction. The 2020 project, in many ways, is the expression of the consumer exchange that is occurring at UC Merced. The institution is expanding to meet the projected enrollment growth, while also engaging in developing a new mechanism for funding by choosing P3 ventures. In response to the line of flight of state funding not allocating money to the institution's construction project, what emerges is the P3 line of flight that carries the financial support of continuing to expand UC Merced. This complicated venture needed all stakeholders to agree to use P3s as a financial means to ensure the success of the project. The current P3 line of flight is materialized through the mixed-use buildings for retail, student services, and administration to all blend together that will create new possibilities. The P3 line of flight is starting to immerse itself into the assemblage, visually, and audibly. The line of flight is more than just a financial partnership it creates new dimensions of the UC Merced assemblage through sights and sounds of materiality.

Defining the Territorial Experience

The Central Valley where UC Merced is located has a rich history of agricultural life. In order to experience the valley, a person can drive North and South on Highway 99 where the majority of the highway is two lanes of traffic in North and South directions. There are portions of the 99 that expand to three lanes which means a driver has an opportunity to pass slow moving agricultural trucks. You are constantly surrounded by farm land; visually you can see farmworkers picking olives, tomatoes, or almonds,



Figure 16. Fields surrounding UC Merced

depending on the season. The eclectic smell of the 99 does not go unnoticed, especially if you did not grow up near agriculture. All these elements are the materiality of the San Joaquin valley; they make up the region and denote you have left the urban hub for the agricultural life. Similar to the Central Valley where UC Merced resides, the institution both shares and creates its own set of elements that indicate to actants that they have arrived at the UC Merced campus. Assemblages are social, discursive, material, and physical; these components must be considered when analyzing UC Merced campus landscape.

The physical landscape embodies the social, discursive, and material aspects of campus. This embodiment occurs through the campus planning documents and the materiality of the buildings. Earlier I discussed how architecture design plans are created

and informed by stakeholders and design determinates that typically view landscape as a neutral space. By theorizing campus landscape design plans as a bounded geographic area, it can illuminate how the UC Merced assemblage seeks to stabilize the identity of the institution.

The design plan of the 2020 project is identified in two broad categories ‘catch up’ space and growth space, signifying that the institution is attempting to serve its current students but also seeking to accommodate expected student growth. The major categories of space being developed in the 2020 project are academic, student housing, student life and athletics, and campus operations. The campus physical landscape has been arranged to maximize usage of the campus space. The system of elements that



Figure 17. Existing Academic Core

comprise the assemblage are articulated in the campus design plans they function as both the

material and expressive components of the assemblage. Buildings, trees, benches, pathways, and other physical features of the campus are the material expression of the assemblage. Their design intent, however, is the expressive components of the assemblage. The *Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP)* lists the academic district,

student neighborhoods, and gateway districts as places where different activities and rituals of the UC Merced community are performed and staged to occur. Each of these districts are designated to accomplish different activities and rituals of the institution. There are three delivery phases: fall 2018, fall 2019 and substantial completion in 2020 (UC Merced, n.d.). The 2020 project brings together the academic mission of the institution with the landscape of the region to illuminate critical thinking (UC Merced, n.d.).

The design principles of the 2020 project seek to define the public space and engage existing spaces so that placemaking can occur. In order to create a distinctive urban environment, buildings will be placed along the edges to create a pedestrian experience on the ground floor of vertical-mixed use buildings. The development of identifiable landmarks will be used to aid in navigating campus, while also placing meaning and importance of place (UC Merced, 2014a). When the 2009 LRPD was developed, a focus on creating projects that were memorable places that “foster scholarly and social relationships, deepen a sense of community and lead to interdisciplinary discovery of new ideas or ways of learning” (UC Merced, 2009, p. 54) was important to creating the culture of the institution. It is through the creation of memorable spaces that the institution seeks to create ways in which Latinx students experience campus. The assemblage seeks to shape the *becoming*. The architectural plan creates memorable places within the assemblage that complement the way the institution has defined learning. Yet there are times when the assemblage architectural plan is disrupted by intrasecting lines of flight that produce other outcomes.

Intermission: Disruption

Cultural centers on college campuses have been identified as a mechanism that retain students of color by providing a physical space, financial resources for cultural events, and staff dedicated to the success of underrepresented students (Patton, 2006). At UC Merced, over 80% of the student body identifies as a student of color; yet, no cultural center space was incorporated in the original or 2020 design plan. Until the first space opened in 2017, UC Merced was the only University of California institution that did not have a cultural center space. The line of flight of student activism has had a long history of demanding the creation of a cultural space with the first proposals for a cultural space dating back to 2007, just three years after opening.

During the 2020 Project groundbreaking ceremony in November 2016, a coalition of Latinx students and other students of color named UPRISE (Uplifting People Power to Resolve Issues of Space and Equity) protested the expansion project because of the lack of dedicated cultural space. UPRISE presented a list of seven demands that ranged from increasing funding for social justice programming, standalone cultural resource center, and increasing diverse faculty and ethnic studies courses, to the demilitarization of campus.



Figure 18. Student Protest at Groundbreaking Ceremony Courtesy: Prodigy for UC Merced

The first cultural space, named the Intercultural Hub, opened in 2017; however, it was not a standalone cultural resource center but rather a smaller room located on the ground floor of the Kolligian Library next to the Bobcat Lair. Undergraduates and

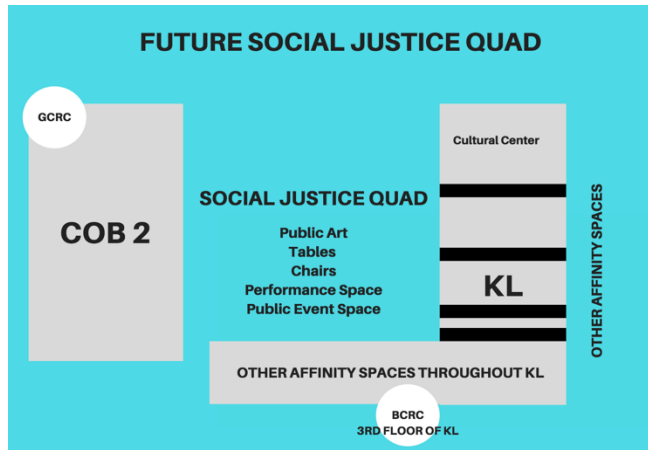


Figure 19. Social Justice Quad Layout Courtesy of UC Merced

graduate students were given a space in the Classroom and Office Building (COB) 2, followed by a Black Student Resource Center on the 3rd floor of the Kolligian Library. Through a series of discussions, students engaged with administration’s request to meet

with student affairs professionals from the Division of Student Affairs to discuss how a cultural space could be created that was not a standalone building as student demands requested. What has been proposed is the development of a social justice quad. The social justice quad was originally a space designed for gathering and serves as a threshold connection for Class and Office Building (COB) 1, Class and Office Building (COB) 2, and the Kolligian Library.

The Bobcat Lair is currently undergoing remodeling in order to become the new space for the Intercultural Hub that will be located next to the Social Justice Initiatives office, the current Intercultural Hub, smaller office spaces, and a tutoring room (which was originally used as the cultural center). In the proposal submitted to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, the ground floor of the Kolligian Library, which

is a mixed-use building, could serve as part of the Social Justice Quad which would “provide a communal space for public art, tables and chairs for community usage, performance space for teach-ins, speakers, performances, etc.” (Grady, Primitivo,

Nekoui, Graduate Resource Center, Black Cultural Resource Center, & Intercultural Hub, 2018, p. 27).



Figure 20. Social Justice Quad

The social justice quad would be surrounded by COB 1 and 2, which currently has classrooms, the Graduate Student of Color Resource Center, and faculty offices for the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts.

The development of the social justice quad in the architectural assemblage becomes part of the reterritorialization. The architectural assemblage becomes destabilized by the line of flight of student activism that has been constant since 2007. However, with the groundbreaking of the 2020 project, the student activism line of flight created a crack within the system that shoots off to reveal gaps in what currently exists. In this instance this crack within the assemblage created the proposed and currently under development social justice quad. The activism by Latinx students and other students of color at UC Merced has led to the creation of cultural center spaces but the architectural

assemblage sought a way to contain the activism by establishing a corner of campus as the social justice quad.

Historically, campus heritage spaces have played a significant role in the design phase; these spaces are how the outside community comes to understand the campus itself (Dober, 2000). Heritage spaces often function as outdoor rooms for campus rituals and occasionally as interim outdoor classrooms. Heritage spaces are also locations where campus unrest and protest occur such as when students occupy administrative buildings or other highly visible areas on campus. These locations are often sites of political and civic discourse. Yet, at UC Merced, there is no centralized campus heritage space that is located near administrative offices. The creation of campus within the context of 21st century has removed all heritage spaces, instead, focusing on developing iconic features that can be captured by visitors through photographs and can be seen in campus viewbooks and websites (Dober, 2000). The removal of heritage spaces away from administrative offices is also a way that the architectural assemblage is able to ensure that the lines of flight of student activism and protest does not have easy access to administration. For example, the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors offices are located in the Kolligian Library on the third floor. The Kolligian Library building has multiple entrances therefore, it would be difficult for students to take over the building.

The creation of the social justice quad is taking the materiality of the architectural assemblage (e.g. the benches, trees, buildings) and creating a geographical boundary where social justice engagement should occur. The social justice quad is an example of the parallel and contradictory outcomes. For instance, the assemblage is accepting the

line of flight of student activism by creating the social justice quad. It does this through sanctioning where social justice activities on campus will occur. By locating the social justice quad away from Scholars Lane, which is the main walkway of campus the assemblage has effectively contained social justice activities hidden from the main campus walkway. Traditionally, the campus physical environment has attempted to remove students from the city and its dangers through the development of a quadrangle design. The design served two points to create an “enclosed quadrangle...as a defense against potential enemies...and the ability to close off a college at few gate points gave college authorities the advantage of greater control over students” (Strange & Banning, 2001, p. 10). In this example, we can see how the physical environment of the campus is still being used to oversee how students are engaging with the campus and their desire to incorporate social justice on campus. The creation of the social justice quad and cultural centers can be seen as a student victory; however, their activities are now able to be monitored by administration and isolated from students that are walking to the science buildings.

Creating the Built Environment

Across the U.S., no two higher education institutions are similar; yet, there are “archetypal images that people associate with the traditional American campus – broad green quadrangles, Gothic archways, bell towers, grand library reading rooms” (Chapman, 2006, p. xxvii). These images are what people associate with traditional college campuses. Chapman (2006) states that the images of campuses reflect the ideals of collegiate form and are rooted in the history of American campus design. While no

two campuses have similarities, the design plans of campus do take into account the needs and physical terrain of the campus. Institutional values as it relates to landscape are viewed through the environmental impact of the campus. For example, environmental suitability, which is on the design taxonomy list (Dober, 2000), is used to determine how the campus will maintain choices of trees, plants, fixed seating, and the usage of water. UC Merced campus landscape is no different. For example, a line of flight that was discussed earlier in *What's our Story* regarding the environmental restrictions due to the endangered Fairy Shrimp species has limited where UC Merced is able to expand. In addition, one of the landscape principles is to create a sustainable landscape. These are two examples of how lines of flight have dictated the way the UC Merced assemblage functions.

As the first campus being built in the 21st century, UC Merced has decided to depart from some of the classical features of American campus design. This point of departure can be attributed to the line of flight that has shifted priorities of the nation as higher education institutions continue to see state budget allocations decrease and an increase in neoliberal ideologies of higher education institutions as sites of economic gain for investors. The financial challenges have made higher education institutions move from building single-use facilities to mixed-use spaces. Mixed-space development, according to Nabers (2018), provides “a boom for universities as they seek new ways to generate revenue and create amenities that appeal to prospective new students and faculty members” (para. 8). Mixed-use space is one mechanism that colleges have turned to for funding. Student housing mixed-use buildings is often low on the list for wealthy donors.

Instead, institutions such as UC Merced, have entered into private-public partnerships (P3s) to subsidize costs of construction while bringing in outside capital (Rothstein, 2018). As previously mentioned, P3 projects have been one way that higher education institutions have been able to develop and renovate campus. Prior to the groundbreaking of the 2020 project, UC Merced had taken three years to determine their needs and meet with development firms. As a result, the cost of the expansion will be paid by the University of California and the Plenary Group, a private developer (Gardner, 2018).

The original buildings on campuses built prior to the 21st century often do not include the mixed-use space; however, as campus construction continues to rise, a more cost-effective approach to development is to create more buildings that are utilized for mixed-use space. The central focus of the 2020 project is to ensure the development of a mixed-use academic core where teaching, research, and administrative activities all blend together. Although the academic core already exists, the addition of new buildings aims to create a core that is more active and accommodating. The accommodations, according to the design plan, will include social spaces, technology, meeting spaces, services, and food (UC Merced, 2014a). Having this mixed-use space is designed to have interdisciplinary interaction amongst faculty, staff, and students. As mixed-use space is a design goal of the plan, many of the new buildings have several spaces that serve this purpose. For example, the student services and pedestrian corridors also function as a mixed-use space. The physical layout of the buildings “create a distinctive, linear pedestrian-oriented corridor connecting the existing campus and the 2020 project” (UC Merced, 2014a, p. 33).

As discussed in the social justice quad intermission, mixed used space is a coded element of the UC Merced assemblage that seeks to stabilize itself though incorporating student demands into the assemblage without actually having to create a standalone cultural building. The original coding that was created by the design plans establishes indirect relations between codes. For example, the layout of the academic core, and the student services and pedestrian corridors seek to create an expected outcome. For students in the corridor, that expected outcome is to “activate key intersections and pathways with extended activity in the evenings and weekends to create a 24-hour urban-like environment” (UC Merced, 2014a, p. 32) despite the campus being located on the outskirts of town and surround by farm land. The social justice quad now will activate the pathway although, there is potential for events to occur in the quad that focus on institutional critique. The architectural assemblage is expressed by the building, public realm, and physical landscape design that seek to contribute to the ‘normalcy’ of campus. Each of these design aspects are coded to produce a desired outcome (see Figure 21); the building seeks to create visible student activity spaces, zones for socialization, and the usage of interior and exterior activity areas for informal and formal program areas. Although the social justice quad is incorporated to the normalcy, it is also capable of producing parallel outcomes by disrupting the daily activities of the assemblage. Mixed-use buildings are the physical built environment that is envisioned for the campus that seeks to accomplish normalcy. The primary focus is interaction among students, staff, and faculty that promotes living and learning 24 hours a day. These are identified by the public realm principles that look to foster interaction and engagement, points of

interaction, and integrate aesthetic and functional features. The mixed-used buildings are acting as the content and expression of the UC Merced assemblage. UC Merced claims it is building a campus of the 21st century that redefines “how university campuses look, feel, and function” (UC Merced, 2009, p. 12); however, it can also be seen as a

reterritorialization of the campus landscape by creating design plans that are coded for a particular function. As you can see in Figure 21, the institution has been



Figure 21. Map of UC Merced Land Usage

coded into areas by what they seek to accomplish. In many ways this image is a color-coded representation of smaller assemblages. The campus is partitioned by academics, traditional residential living, sports and wellness, transit hub, and living and learning. In Figure 21 the partitioning of campus visually signify how points of campus should behave. The campus design plans are creating a system of elements that are seeking to create a ‘normal’ experience for all actants which occurs through the design determinates. The creation placemaking in the UC Merced assemblage is created by the design plans, placemaking should be associated with the determines indicated in Figure 21. These determinants in the assemblage function as both content and expression.

The pre-existing relationship amongst objects (e.g., the buildings, walkways, and activity zones) have been designed to increase the interdisciplinary experience amongst the campus community. The creation of intimate learning and close collaboration is the “hallmark of a UC Merced education” (UC Merced, 2009 p. 41). The mixed-use buildings make the UC Merced hallmark possible blurring the lines between living and learning. Elements are coded in a way that allow the territorial assemblage to function in proper form (e.g. the system of elements is the desire to utilize mixed-use space). The coding of the mixed-use space has a large role in determining how the campus actants are supposed to interact with each other but also how their academic interests should be focused through an interdisciplinary lens. As elements of the UC Merced campus are coded Latinx students come to learn about the institution through their socio-cultural relationship with UC Merced, one way this occurs is through academics.

Intermission: Mapping Out Academic Interests

As an observer spending time in the academic core of campus, I quickly began to identify how Scholar’s Lane is more than just a main walkway of campus; it also divides campus into separate academic areas. Scholar’s Lane is a predominant feature of campus. Parts of Scholar’s Lane are closed off to vehicular traffic creating what Dober (2002) states is a highly valuable network of systems that enhance all aspects of campus life. The design plans of the 2020 project seek to incorporate the existing academic core with additional mixed-use buildings. However, as the design plans come to fruition, I began to see that the mixed-use buildings also play a role in shaping the academic experience.

During observations of campus, the ways in which students moved throughout campus became an important focal point. Students are learning new ways of navigating campus in order to get to class on time because of walkways being closed throughout campus. Yet, despite construction



Figure 22. Construction barriers on Scholar's Lane block road access to the bridge

blocking off portions of campus, the layout of existing buildings was still operating properly according to the territorial codes. Deleuze and Guattari (1998) and DeLanda (2016) argue that territorial codes define the 'natural' norms of life as they express the given and proper limits and usages of actants and objects in an assemblage. In this case, the UC Merced assemblage is seeking to shape academic interest of students by defining where they spend their time on campus.

Walking up Scholar's Lane to the heart of campus and the academic core, the road turns into a main walkway that divides the academic core between the sciences and the social sciences. During observations, I noticed that students maneuvered their way on campus depending on their academic majors. Being geographically isolated outside of city forces students to arrive to campus either by car or bus. Once on campus, all students make their way up the hill in order to get to the

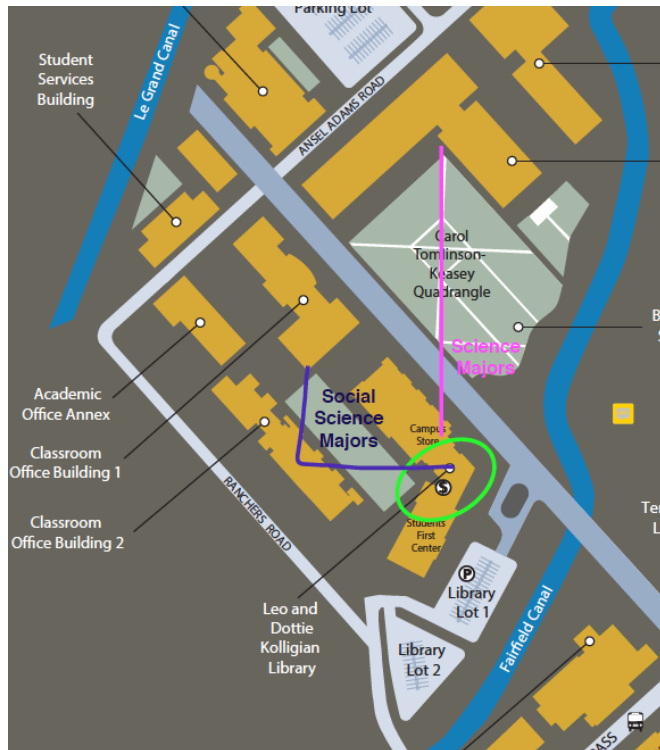


Figure 23. Map of UC Merced Walking Paths for Social Science and STEM Majors

academic core of campus. However, once they arrive to the academic core, their paths are divided depending on their majors. For Latinx students who are enrolled as Social Sciences major, the majority of classes are either in COB 1 or 2, with the recent opening of the Glacier Point and Granite Point a few classes have shifted. If a Latinx student is a Science major, the majority of classes are scheduled in the Science and Engineering Buildings 1 and 2.

Spending time on campus I quickly learned that the mixed-use Kolligian Library building serves as the hub for studying and hanging out. While I was leaving the library, I observed that the majority of students moved throughout campus depending on their major. While the Kolligian Library serves a gathering space for students to do homework, eat lunch, or meet with friends, once they leave the library their movement depends on their major. As seen in Figure 23, students in the Social Sciences do not have to interact with the faculty, staff, and students in the Sciences. In the Figure 23, the green circle is the Kolligian Library, the pink line is the pathway taken by science majors. While the purple line indicates where the social science majors take their classes. Observations demonstrated that there was

little interaction between students in SSHA and STEM fields, unless these students were already friends outside of the classroom. The landscape design further creates this division due to the buildings being on different sides of Scholar's Lane.

Coding within an assemblage functions to provide a specific set of limits by

creating guidelines as to how a person should interact with the materiality of the

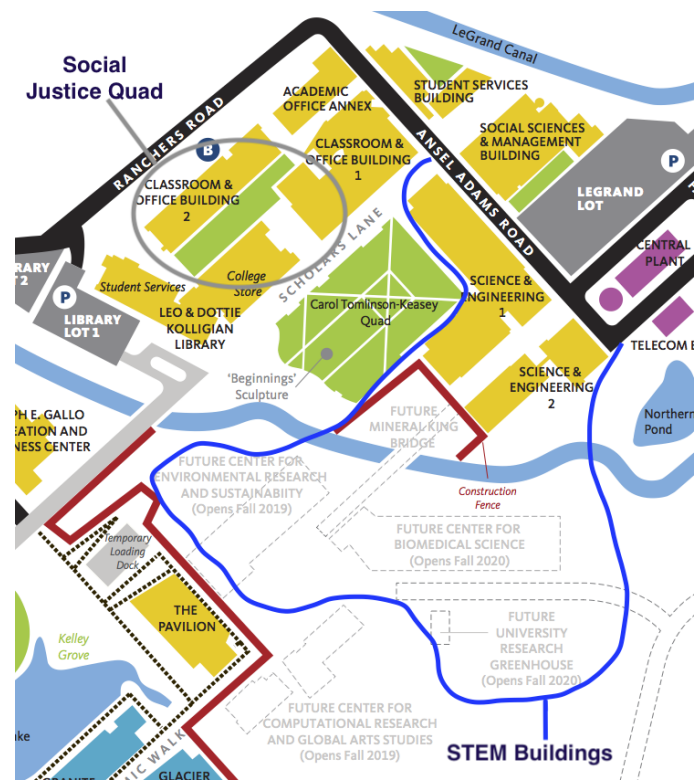


Figure 24. Social Justice quad location on UC Merced Campus

assemblage. In this case, every building has a designated purpose and every actant has a role within the institution. There is coded system of elements that come to define the ‘normalcy’ of the everyday UC Merced experience. As the 2020 plan continues to complete its delivery phases, the values of the institution continue to be demonstrated within the objects of the assemblage. The detailed project states “UC Merced is and will continue to be a STEM campus” (UC Merced, n.d.e., p. 28). The new buildings that will be complete are dedicated to the STEM. In this statement we can see how the nested set of assemblages of academics, architecture, and distinction have come together to produce a stabilized identity of UC Merced as a STEM Campus. Latinx students are fully aware of the expression of the UC Merced assemblage as a STEM campus, one student described the expansion as “it is all about STEM, the expansion, like oh here are our new STEM buildings but there is not a plan for SSHA or cultural spaces.”

The goals of the design plan create a pre-established investment of the campus landscape that extends to the actants of the assemblage so that actant know how to experience campus. However, when lines of flight such as the student activism intrasect with the UC Merced assemblage it is disrupted. Exploring the territorial codes created by design plan allow us to examine UC Merced as an organizational assemblage and how the parameters and coding are defined within the assemblage through the physical terrain. However, the creation of the social justice quad by student activists has disrupted the assemblage. Yet, the location of the social justice quad in the architectural assemblage is also informing how and what type of students will be exposed to social justice events and learning. As explained in Figure 24, Scholar’s Lane divides the campus between STEM

buildings and non-STEM buildings. A student in the STEM field does not have to interact with certain buildings nor the social justice quad. The social justice quad behind Scholar's Lane isolates social justice activities to the social sciences. If you are not a student majoring in a Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts (SSHA) field, there is no reason for a student to enter the social justice quad. Essentially, the UC Merced assemblage through the architecture is expressing parallel outcomes; students are provided the social justice quad and cultural centers; however, they are not at the center of the institutions landscape. Rather these cultural centers and quad are regulated to a back-quad space away from the main walkway, STEM buildings, and exposure to the larger UC Merced community. The coding indicates that concrete elements are being used according to their proper or natural usage; they are special expressive components in the assemblage that create a fixing identity (DeLanda, 2006). UC Merced assemblage is expressing that "UC Merced is and will continue to be a STEM campus" (UC Merced, 2009a, p. 28). As a result, UC Merced is creating a fixed identity of a STEM campus; yet, Latinx students are disrupting the assemblage by creating new lines of flight.

Implications of the Architectural Assemblage

The UC Merced assemblage through the design plan has created a normative experience that is manufactured through buildings, public realms, and the physical landscape design. However, these conditions are not static as actants can deterritorialize the assemblage. As actants deterritorialize the assemblage, the assemblage works to reterritorialize itself in order to maintain a certain level of stabilization as seen with the social justice quad. Viewing the campus design plans as assemblages of assemblages and

exploring each nested level and its own parameters, we can begin to capture the complex interactions between each level. For instance, we can see how the intentions of UC Merced campus as a STEM campus has impacted the ways in which students engage interdisciplinary or do not engage. This example demonstrates the nested levels of the academic aspirations, architectural, and the desire to solve issues of the 21st century. What we come to grasp is that deterritorialization occurs at nested levels and at different times. The changes at different levels have an effect on the parameters of larger UC Merced assemblage in which they reside. Depending on how the deterritorialization is taking place and what it is hoping to accomplish, the assemblage will act within its parameters to make the deterritorialization part of the norm of the assemblage. The social justice quad is just one example of how, within the architectural assemblage, student activism is incorporated in order to normalize and control how student activism and the Intercultural Hub operate on campus.

This section sought to demonstrate how the UC Merced architectural assemblage is the content and expression that seeks to stabilize the identity of campus through its design plan. Building on the *What's our Story, Assembling the Landscape* section demonstrated the ways that the materiality of the assemblages have connections through relational lines that are dynamic and an ongoing process. While the campus design plan seek to use the materiality of the campus to create a fixed UC Merced experience. Latinx students on campus have deterritorialized the architecture by using the space to create their own experience concurrently. The UC Merced assemblage through its architecture has sought to create a normal experience on campus, essentially creating the institutional

agent, those that are able to use the campus as designed will be successful in the territory. However, the moments of deterritorialization indicate that the assemblage is not stable but rather producing parallel outcomes. The next section, *Entangled Becomings*, is a component of the assemblage that provides the insights and impression of how the Latinx student and UC Merced is constantly *becoming*, while functioning as the content and expression of the assemblage.

Part Four: Entangled *Becomings*

Space and Place

The terms space and place are often used interchangeably when speaking about a certain locale. To make the distinction De Certeau (1984) describes place as an embodied experience and space as the movement and reflection of different social practices. In this case the UC Merced's campus buildings, greenery, walkways, and other objects are located in relation to each other in space but the interaction and movement within these locations is what makes the campus a place. Social theorists, for example, Bourdieu (1977), Lefebvre (1991), Foucault (1977), and Deleuze and Guattari (1988), have focused on the physical space and spatial relations of the subjugated by the state and other sources of power and knowledge. Scholars (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; DeLanda, 2006; Foucault, 1975) have also addressed how the body is a dimension of spatial and political control, which provides a basis for spatial arguments. Foucault's (1975) work on prisons takes a historical approach to conduct analysis on the human body and spatial arrangements and architecture. By examining the relations of power and space, Foucault demonstrates the ways in which architecture can be a technology of control and power over individuals. Deleuze and Guattari (1988) were also concerned with how people resist spatial discipline, although they approach spatial analysis as a nomad escaping the state by never *becoming* reterritorialized, slipping through space of power to resist state control.

Lefebvre (1991) views space as a social product that contradicts its own production and destruction. Space in Lefebvre's (1991) work is viewed as a social product that is made up of a triad of spatial practices, representations of space, and representational spaces. This triad provides a theory of space that includes the embodied spatial production that can potentially lead to revolutionary action (Lefebvre, 1991). The theory of space (Lefebvre, 1991) includes embodied spatial practices that examines how the human body is producing and not just conceiving space. This is often thought of as the social production of space. The social production of space is the lens that illuminates how space or place come into existence and questions how political, economic, and historical motives are influencing the planning and development which results in the physical material setting (Low, 2009). The production of space also aids in uncovering the latent ideologies that underline its materiality (Low, 2016). When conceptualizing space and place within the campus landscapes, assemblage theory (DeLanda, 2006) illuminates how emergent systems such as politics, economics, and history inform how the UC Merced assemblage functions.

The political economy of space is driven by the political and economic relations that initiate and drive spatial production (Low, 2016). Mitchell, Wood, and Witherspoon (2010) discuss the importance of how campus space and place is actively produced through the political, social, geographical, and relational functions that have on going power dynamics. Mitchell et al., (2010) argue that landscape studies must have a regional and global context as landscapes are sites of investments and are shaped by current technology and are considered a place for social relations and the foundation of those

formations. The development of a campus landscape does not occur in isolation but rather is in relationship to the local, regional, and global context of higher education. Each institution of higher education is an investment for all parties involved. For example, Latinx students at UC Merced use their economic capital (tuition) to obtain a degree and the connections created are turned into cultural capital. As previously mentioned, educational landscapes are also mechanisms for control; therefore, it is important to pay attention to campus landscapes and how they reinforce and dismantle inequalities. Campus landscapes can provide insights on the political, economic, and historical motives for the development of higher education institutions.

Perceiving space as a static, closed system, and as always, a representation of time, allows us to ignore the real impact that space has on spatialized subjectivity. Massey (2005) argues that “space is equally exhilarating and threatening” (p. 59), space provides insights into what is occurring and what has yet to occur. Throughout this inquiry space has been conceptualized as open, relational, ongoing, and always *becoming*. This allows for history to be open and for the possibilities of politics in the campus landscape to occur (Massey, 2005). The UC Merced campus is a product of relations. It is through the actants of the space that gives UC Merced the meaning of place, place is “socially constructed by the people who live in them and know them; they are politicized, culturally relative, and historically specific multiple constructions” (Rodman, 1992, p. 641). The social exchanges that occur within the UC Merced assemblage makes UC Merced a place.

The architectural design of the campus landscapes are the material and discursive expressions that contribute to the *becoming* of the actants in the UC Merced assemblage. It is important to note that the architectural assemblage is also *becoming* as the 2020 project is under construction. As the 2020 project finishes it will shift the center of campus, create new access point and buildings of importance could lose it importance as new buildings and activities take place on campus. “*Entangled Becomings*” focuses on the materiality and the *becoming* of the campus landscape. Since the fall of 2016, archival work, observations and interviews have been conducted with Latinx students, faculty, and staff. As data was collected and thinking with theory occurred throughout the years, the concepts of *becoming* institutional agent and *becoming* Latinx student were developed.

Intermission: The Journey Starts Now

To become an HSI, the federal legislation states that 25% of the student body must identify as Latinx and 50% of the 25% must be low-income (Devaris, 2000; Espino & Cheslock, 2012). As previously stated, UC Merced became an HSI in 2010 with 32%



Figure 25. Bobcat Orientation Footprints



Figure 26. PowerPoint slide showing goals of Bobcat Orientation

of Latinx student body and has remained an HSI with 54.7% of Latinx students currently enrolled in the 2018-2019 academic year. Whenever you attend an institutional event on campus you will hear the following information: 75% of our students are first-generation, over 60% of our students receive the Pell Grant, and our students come from Los Angeles County, North San Joaquin Valley, and San Francisco Bay area (UC Merced, n.d.a.). These three facts have been said at almost every institutional event I have attended; the facts provide insight into how students are conceptualized by the UC Merced administration.

Students, who are admitted to UC Merced attend Bobcat orientation, where there are three goals of the day, “relationship building, resources, and reflection (see Figure 26)” Eight orientation days are offered by the institution for newly admitted students and families to attend. Out of these eight days, one day is dedicated to transfer students and three orientations are offered in Spanish. Sessions have been offered on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The offering of Spanish orientation programming for families, demonstrates that the UC Merced assemblage acknowledges their designation; however, these three sessions are not completely accommodating when over 37.9% of students indicated that English and another language is spoken at home and 34.3% were from a home that another language other than English was spoken (UC Merced, n.d.c.).

It is during orientation programming that students come to gain knowledge on what it means to be a Bobcat by the institution. Students are given information regarding how to make the most out of their UC Merced experience by engaging in student activities and research opportunities. There are a series of workshops that are tailored to students by

their academic majors. As students disperse to the various classrooms where they will learn more about their majors, the division between the STEM and Social Sciences has begun. As previously discussed in *Constructing the Landscape*, there is little interaction between the majors as the architectural layout of campus divides where students attend classes. This separation trend starts the division at orientation and will continue unless students switch majors. Latinx students tend to build friendships within their classes rather than student organizations, “most of my closest friends, I have is because of my classes. Not because of outside clubs or organizations a lot them happened because we connected in class” (Interview, Andrea). The campus design plans are functioning the way they were coded: it has separated students by major and left little room for interaction among students.



Figure 27. Orientation session

The Classroom and Office Building 1 (COB 1), has one of the largest classrooms on campus and is used for the orientation welcoming. The lecture hall fits 377 people and is half-filled with students and families ready to learn more about what it will mean to attend UC Merced. When you walk into the classroom there is a large screen projecting *Welcome to the Bobcat Family* (see Figure 27) the room is filled with diverse families who are ready to learn more about UC Merced. The Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs enters the stage and begins to inform the attendees about the progress that has been made on the 2020 project. He then lists the attributes of the campus “*we have smaller class sizes, over 60% of the student*



Figure 28. Orientation signage

body is involved in the community, and each student has the ability to engage in meaningful research with faculty that will change the world” (Field notes). This statement is a nod to the fact that research institutions are typically larger institutions that only give a few undergraduates these opportunities. It is stressed in both the family and student sections, that working with faculty on research is an experience that should be taken by students.

As the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs leaves the stage, a group of orientation leaders step up on stage. The orientation leaders are majority students of color. As they



Figure 29. Bobcat Day Tabling for Student Organizations

introduce themselves, they state their names, major, hometown, and if they speak another language. The majority of orientation leaders speak Spanish.

Orientation leaders then give instructions to students about where to meet next and ask the family members to stay in the lecture hall. It is at this moment when orientation leaders act as an extension of the institution for the UC Merced assemblage. For instance, incoming students are told their orientation leaders will provide them with the knowledge to be successful at the institution. Orientation leaders are an example of how to successfully navigate the institution and become the embodiment of the institutional agent. Although the orientation leaders are acting as institutional agents, they also share their own experiences and struggles with students during their breakout groups. While serving as an institutional agent they are concurrently *becoming* the Latinx student by breaking away with the dominant narrative of how to succeed on campus.

Orientation day is packed with information on how to succeed in college, the goals of ‘relationship building, resources, and reflection’ are designed into every aspect of the program. Orientation leaders and student affairs practitioners provide students with the various resources available on campus such as the student success services, research

opportunities, and involvement. Orientation day serves as a way for students to learn how UC Merced defines success for first-generation and Pell eligible students. For example, orientation leaders demonstrate to students how to use their online platforms, how the Catcard (student identification) can be used for, and how to get involved on campus and in the community. These are some examples, in which the UC Merced assemblage is expressing their support and opportunities for Latinx students to become involved with the goal to succeed in higher education. The sessions indicate to the Latinx student what it takes to be academically successful. The academic success of Latinx students not only supports their success in higher education but also offers a higher prestige for the institution. In 2015, UC Merced had exceeded its graduation predicated rate of 52% and achieved a 66% graduation rate. The new rate is above the national average of 59% and landed the ranking of 8th in the nation for outperforming graduation expectations (Calix, 2016). In 2018, UC Merced ranked 2nd in the nation for overperforming in six-year graduation rate (Leonard, 2018). This success is the expression of the UC Merced assemblage producing parallel outcomes. The institution is increasing their graduation rates by providing Latinx students programming that allows them to graduate in six years despite the predictors indicating that they will not finish a college degree. At the same time Latinx students are engaging with the UC Merced assemblage by participating in programming they are rejecting the narrative of them being ill-prepared for higher education.

Week of Welcome is another event that is dedicated to teaching incoming students how to be successful. It is through these ritual events that students learn to become an institutional agent. After attending week of welcome events students are ready to start class and begin their academic journey. It is in their first few days on campus when they learn what it will mean to be a student at UC Merced. During most welcome events, students are reminded by numerous institutional agents that the three pillars of the UC system are, ‘excellence in research, teaching, and public service.’ It is through these three pillars that administration informs students that ‘at UC Merced, the focus for students isn’t on surviving; it’s on embracing these pillars as cornerstones of a successful collegiate career.’ The workshops and events throughout the week aid in establishing the institutional agent that will engage with all three pillars. For example, there are three fairs (see Figures 29 and 30) that all target the public service pillar (e.g. student clubs and organizations, community involvement, and community business). Research and teaching pillars are addressed through a variety of workshops held during the week such as *Navigating the University: A Guide for First Generation College Students*, *Introduction to STEM Internships, Careers and Experiences*, and *Exploring MyDegreePath*. These workshops serve to inform students how they can navigate, participate in research, and ensure that they graduate on time.

While the information



Figure 30. Bobcat Day Orientation Tabling for Student Services

received in these sessions is important for student learning it is also a time when students are taught how to be a successful student and ways to engage with the institution in an appropriate matter. Multiple outcomes are occurring as the institutional *becoming* is being shaped by ritual cultures.

The programming of these events are providing the keys to be successful at the same time they are instilling into the Latinx students how to engage with the institution. The outcome of these events are parallel, it seeks to ensure Latinx students are successful in order for UC Merced to meet the institutional academic goals, while also wanting students to succeed personally. Latinx students are told that they must engage with the UC pillars in order to have a successful collegiate career. It is through these ritual cultures that Latinx students enter the institution learning how to engage with the UC pillars which guarantee a successful academic career. However, Latinx students already come to campus with the mindset of being successful that the UC Merced assemblage does not acknowledge. A Latinx described his fellow Latinx students as already being successful, “I feel like the majority of the students that come to UC Merced come with the mentality that they already beat the odds to make it to the university and to get into a UC.” While the assemblage is telling Latinx students how to be successful through its campus landscape and ritual events. Latinx students are already entering UC Merced, with the desire and mentality of success. The *becoming* institutional agent and the *becoming* Latinx students are entangled with the UC Merced assemblage. The two *becomings* are side by side and need each other in order to produce the success of UC Merced and the Latinx student.

Becoming Institutional Agents

As the newest institution in the University of California system, UC Merced serves to expand the system's capacity to serve the growing state population as well as to enhance the tenets of the California Master Plan (UC Merced, 2009b). The UC system is known for its academic excellence and prestige, it is often described "as a research powerhouse that prepares economically diverse students to effect positive change in the world around them" (UC Newsroom, 2017, para. 4). In order for UC Merced to continue the UC academic tradition, academic leaders from across the UC system came together to build out the academic profile of the campus. A critical decision that was made and continues to shape UC Merced was the intent to not develop academic departments but rather embrace institutes that would attract faculty from various disciplines that could solve the critical societal issues of the region (Tomlinson-Keasey, 2007). The academic plan started with the institutions three founding schools: School of Engineering, School of Natural Sciences, School of Social Science, Humanities, and the Arts (UC Merced, 2009b). Like other UC institutions the academic planning is based on the UC traditions of excellence in research and educational experiences.

In 2009, a Strategic Academic Vision was created by UC Merced faculty and staff. This plan was developed as a guiding document would last until the 25th anniversary of the institution in 2025 (UC Merced, 2009b). The plan serves as a guiding document with a long-term objective, "to serve the people of the region, the state, and the world through an uncommon commitment to excellence in education, research and public service" (UC Merced, 2009b, p. 2). The vision behind UC Merced academics is to blend

academic and professional disciplines and entrepreneurial programs that are grounded in “economic, health, environmental, educational and cultural issues that impact the quality of life in California and the world beyond” (UC Merced, 2009b, p. 12). Throughout the document, the San Joaquin Valley is mentioned as a “living laboratory” for research and education that will attract faculty, staff, graduate students, and “a highly capable and motivated undergraduate student body” (p. 13). The document also refers to the Central Valley as a microcosm of the world due to its “diverse population, narrow economic base, low levels of educational attainment, and abundant health issues” (p. 16). The description in this document demonstrates the deficit perspective that frames the Central Valley as a region that is in need of the UC to come and aid in the development. The region is conceptualized by the UC as “unrealized potential” (UC Merced, 2009b, p. 8). This description can be traced back to the site selection process where the San Joaquin Valley was described from a deficit perspective; newspaper articles framed the region as uneducated and with high rates of unemployment (Wallace, 1995).

The Strategic Academic Vision plan aids in the *becoming* institutional agent by shaping the educational experiences of UC Merced students. The plan lays out the five research themes for the institution including: (a) environmental sustainability; (b) human health; (c) cognitive science and intelligent systems interdisciplinary inquiry in minds machines and management; (d) culture, community, and identity; and (e) the dynamics of social and economic progress. These five research themes served to guide the institution to establishing the academic trajectory for UC Merced. These goals are set to establish UC Merced’s ultimate goal “to provide programmatic breadth and excellence in

education and research that will signal our entry into the Association of American Universities” (UC Merced, 2009b, p. 13). In order to gain entry to the Association of American Universities (AAU) an institution must be invited. There is currently 60 U.S. based research universities that earned the majority of awarded federal grants and award nearly one-half of all U.S. doctoral degrees and 55 percent of those in sciences and engineering (Association of American Universities, n.d.). Six of the ten UC institutions are currently AAU and out of those six three are Hispanic-Serving Institutions (AAU, n.d.). Unlike the HSI designation, which is enrollment based, membership into AAU is only obtained through strategic planning that is focused on the academic and research profile of the institution. The academic goals of UC Merced are a line of flight that desires AAU membership; however, the dominate narrative of Latinx students as being ill-prepared has the potential to disrupt this line of flight.

At the time of the development of the Strategic Academic Vision, Latinx students made up 29% of the student population and the 31% of all students were from the San Joaquin Valley (UC Merced, 2009b). The Strategic Academic Vision describes the San Joaquin Valley as a region that is in need of educational and economic opportunities; yet, despite this being true, the plan neglects to mention the years of poor resource allocation by the state. Instead it frames the San Joaquin Valley as region in need of the assistance of the UC system. When thinking with assemblage theory, reading this document and the data begins to demonstrate how parallel outcomes are possible within the UC Merced assemblage. For instance, the Strategic Academic Vision, states “the university’s highly diverse student body, reflecting the broad mix of cultures and ethnicities within the state

and society as a whole, will provide the perfect backdrop to reinforce the concept of global community” (UC Merced, 2009b, p. 2). Yet following this statement, the plan goes on to describe the student body as ill-prepared, “recognizing that students arrive on campus with varying levels of preparedness, the university will provide the necessary support structure to ensure every student has a chance to succeed” (UC Merced, 2009b, p. 35). The varying levels of preparedness is often addressed by the institution by offering support services on campus (e.g. Fiat Lux, a program for first-generation students) that focuses on academic and personal support during their time on campus. The program is designed for first-year students who are first-generation, income eligible students with the goal of “enhancing academic performance, drive, ambition and overall college experience through a structured system of resources and intrusive advising” (UC Merced, n.d.b., para. 1). In the 2018-2019 academic year, the program serves 150 first-year students. While this is a significant number it is important to note that at least 1,418 first-year students are Pell-Grant recipients (UC Merced, n.d.a.). The academic profile of UC Merced students is an important line of flight that contributes to the institutional goal of attaining membership into AAU. The Fiat Lux program provides the academic support that aids in a first-generation student’s ability to achieve academic success at UC Merced; however, it also provides the institution the ability to monitor the Latinx students’ academics through intrusive advising. This type of advising also serves as a method of surveillance and control by the assemblage. Intervention is to ensure the academic success of the student, which is important, but it is also used as a tool to ensure that the student does not hurt the academic profile of the assemblage. Intrusive advising as an

assemblage has parallel outcomes that support the larger UC Merced assemblage. For Latinx students that participate in the Fiax Lux program, they learn how to navigate the institution and the culture of higher education.

Ritual cultures often aid students in helping them make meaning of campus through their participation in events (Manning, 2000; Magolda, 2000; Gildersleeve & Sifuentez, 2017). In the case of the Fiax Lux program, there are aspects of ritual cultures that teach the students how to be good UC Merced students such as learning study skills, how to engage with faculty, and professional development opportunities. It is through these ritual cultures that the UC Merced assemblage is expressing the importance of academic success. However, there is also a vested interest in the success of these students as it will uplift the academic profile of the institution in order to one day gain admissions to AAU. The Strategic Academic Vision and goals of AAU membership seek to push Latinx students to be academically successful. In an interview conducted by Watanabe (2018) with Chancellor Leland, she discusses practices that are being put in place to retain students:

There are national studies that show that feelings of attachment to a campus are a retention boost. Many of our students just feel it's a vibrant community. They feel comfortable. They feel as if their cultures are represented. I think that helps. (para. 3)

Although the implementation of these practices is uplifting the academic profile of UC Merced, the line of flight of Latinx students being ill-prepared continues. For students that are not involved with institutional programs, they must create their own support

systems in order to overcome the deficit narrative that institutional agents have created through the assemblage. In the same interview Chancellor Leland describes UC Merced students as “most of our students are poor, they're first generation, minority. If you look at how those students are predicted to do, we're 16 points higher than predicted” (Wantanbe, 2018, para. 3). In the above quote one is able to see how Latinx students are the expression and object of the assemblage. Latinx students are discussed in terms of prediction and their ability to score higher. Their success in turn aids the assemblage’s ability to uplift their academic profile.

Latinx students are currently part of the *becoming* of the UC Merced assemblage as administration seeks to evolve the institution through gaining more prestigious designations such as AAU membership. The lines of flight of campus design plans, academic goals, and ill-prepared Latinx students all intrasect and shape the *becoming* of the institutional agent. These lines of flight are not mutually exclusive, they all have a part in producing parallel outcomes and shaping the *becoming* Latinx student. As the students are *becoming* the institutional agent, they are concurrently *becoming* the Latinx student.

Intermission: New Beginnings

With the sounds of construction in the background and Justin Timberlake’s *I Can’t Stop the Feeling* blaring from the podium speakers, the incoming first-year students and transfer students stand on Muir Street between the health center and the Sierra Terraces waiting for the program to start. Approximately 2,000 students wear their blue t-shirts with the image of the New Beginnings statue and the saying *The Journey*

Starts Now stand around waiting for the event to begin. Some students are talking to each other, others just awkwardly stand around trying not to stand out, all of them are waiting for their cue to ‘officially’ start their journey at UC Merced. Around 9:00 am. Rufus, the Bobcat mascot approaches the stage and stands in front of the mic attempting to wake up the crowd of students by having them cheer. The cheers from the crowd are lack luster but who can blame them its Tuesday morning at 9:00 am and I am sure many students would rather be sleeping. The attempts to energize the crowd last about two minutes. A student affair professional walks up to the podium and introduces himself. He starts to share his story:

Ten years ago, I was a freshman at UC Merced and participated in this exact event, I know what it feels like to be you, your about to cross the very same bridge and begin the journey as a Bobcat. Remember we are here for you; all the faculty and staff here want you to succeed. (Observation Notes)

The Scholars Lane Bridge Crossing has been established as a tradition for all incoming and transfer students. When he finishes speaking, he asks the crowd to welcome the Chancellor. This time the crowd cheers louder. Perhaps they finally woke up or maybe they are just excited to cross that bridge and begin their journey as a Bobcat.

As a new institution and over the last 14 years, UC Merced has been establishing its own set of traditions. Part of the excitement of the new institution is the ability to be the first. Chancellor Leland once stated that at UC Merced students, “you build your traditions, you build your student organizations, you build your student volunteer connections to the communities. Many students who come here get to be the founders of traditions or organizations that will persist far beyond them” (Busta, 2018, para. 10). This particular rite of passage started when the campus doors opened in 2005. When this event was first observed in 2016, it was held in the South Fishbowl, a location on campus that has been transformed into a



Figure 31. Bridge connecting the academic core and student housing and recreation

construction site. Two more observations of this ritual occurred in 2017 and 2018. When construction began on the 2020 project, the event had to change location due to construction. On this day, students gathered and listened to Chancellor Leland describe that they will walk through the New Beginnings Statue as a first-year, and they will again walk through the statue at graduation. Most recently, in the fall of 2018, the students gathered on Muir Street given that the South Fishbowl space has transformed. The South Fishbowl has been converted to flat ground that will now be the location of a new research center. In the past three academic years of observing this ritual, the landscape of

campus has changed drastically; the only consistent materiality of campus has been the presence of Latinx students in every incoming class.

Since 2005, each incoming class at UC Merced has started their journey on campus and have become part of the UC Merced assemblage by crossing the bridge. In order to get to classes or to access some student services students must cross the bridge. Each student will bring their own assemblages will contribute to new lines of flight that will shape the *becoming* of UC Merced. Not only are students *becoming* part of the institution, but they are also in the process of *becoming* the Latinx student as well. Assemblage Theory allows for the nexuses between different systems of knowledge creation to demonstrate the way we live in the world. In this case, the Scholars Lane Bridge Crossing is functioning as the nexuses of Latinx students and the institution. This nexus is part of the *becoming* of the institutional agent and the Latinx student. Latinx students are being incorporated into the UC Merced assemblage through the bridge



Figure 32. Scholar Lane Crossing, students walking towards bridge and New Beginnings Statue

crossing while at the same time they are creating new lines of flight for the UC Merced assemblage.

Chancellor Leland approaches the mic as Rufus walks away. Despite having a microphone and speakers, it is hard for me to hear her voice as she is being drowned out by construction that is occurring on the other side of Scholars Lane, where the South Fishbowl once was. After what seemed about two minutes of her speaking to the incoming class, she makes her way to the front of Muir Street where she joins the cheer squad. The walk to the New Beginnings statue officially begins at the intersection of Muir Street and Scholar's Lane. Scholar's Lane is currently the main walk way of campus. For anyone, who parks in parking lots at the bottom of the hill, Scholars Lane is the main road to get to campus. With the exception of buses, most of Scholars Lane is designed to prohibit vehicles from entering. The road is designated for bicycles and pedestrians and it is the most common walkway used on campus. Often students are the only ones on this path as they walk to their cars or residential halls. Occasionally, an administrator makes their way down the hill, but you will most likely see them do this in a UC Merced golf cart. As students crossed the bridge about 20-30 staff and faculty are



lined up on the both sides of the bridge cheering on the students as they walked across the bridge and towards New Beginning's. Many of the staff and

Figure 33. New Beginnings Courtesy of UC Merced

faculty held signs that said, ‘welcome to the Bobcat family, we are here for you, congrats, and let the journey begin.’ The incoming UC Merced students are majority students of color. However, the staff who participate in the ceremony are not reflective of this student body. As previously mentioned, white staff members make up 42% while Latinx staff only makeup 21% of student affairs practitioners. In daily interactions Latinx students do not see themselves represented among the staff on campus. As I was talking to a Latinx student about working with faculty she stated:

We are not reflected, you only see that if you are in certain majors, there are some (Latinx faculty) in Sociology and Critical Ethnic and Race Studies. I see myself in them and it’s easier to talk to them unlike other professors. It is difficult to work with some staff because they do not understand us. They do not always understand our background or what we have been through or what we want to accomplish and where we want to go next. (Interview, Mayra).

The daily interactions among Latinx students with each other is a norm, they see other Latinx students on campus and in their classrooms, however, their interactions with staff,

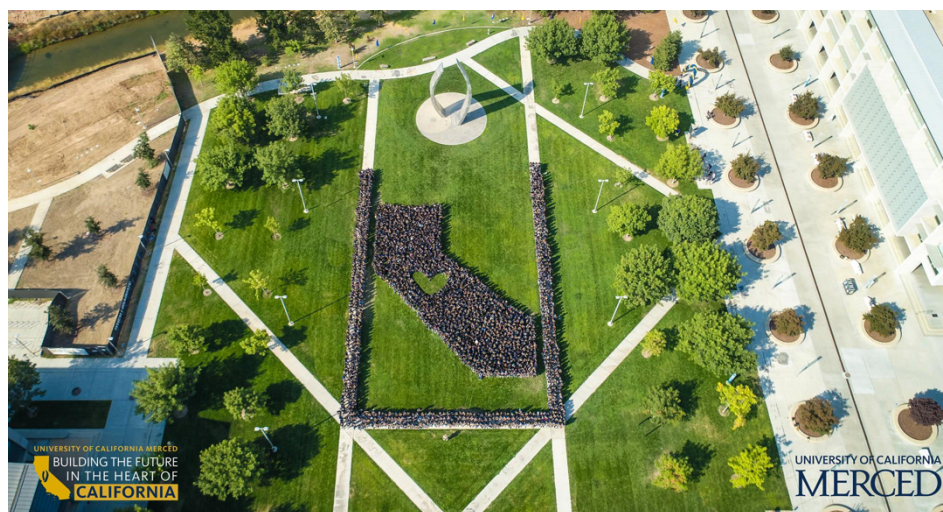


Figure 34. UC Merced incoming class (2018)

administration, and faculty is limited to who they take classes with and what student affair professionals they choose to interact with.

At the New Beginnings statue students are met by Rufus, cheerleaders, and orientation leaders attempting to direct pedestrian traffic. Orientation leaders ask students to stand in designated areas with the anticipation of filling the state of California with a heart in the middle of the state where the Central Valley and UC Merced is located (see figure 34). In 2015 UC Merced has started using the slogan ‘building the future in the heart of California.’ Walking through the New Beginnings statue is a rite of passage, as Chancellor Leland had said just minutes before, this is the beginning of their journey. However, for many Latinx students their journey is not theirs alone but rather it is part of their family’s journey. This journey is just a continuation of their life. In the current landscape of campus, the New Beginnings statue is the iconic image of campus (see Figure 21). During graduation season you can see students in their caps and gowns taking photos at the statue. While UC Merced uses this ritual as a starting point of students’ academic career, Latinx student view the ritual differently. The Scholars Lane Bridge crossing is the start of building a collective, this is how a Latinx student described the ritual:

It is very symbolic of our campus; it encompasses how we are because we are one of the few universities where all students work together and not against one another. Like if we’re going to fail, we are going to fail together. We are going to do this together. (Interview, Vanessa).

In this statement, Vanessa begins to describe how working together is part of the student culture of UC Merced. Despite the institution saying that the UC pillars of excellence in research, teaching, and public service, makes for a successful collegiate experience, the *becoming* Latinx student creates a new possibility of working with others in order to be successful.

Becoming Latinx Student

It is common to hear Spanish being spoken throughout campus by students who are either talking to each other or on the phone. If you listen closely when you are walking next to students, you can hear either Spanish or English music blasting from students' headphones. Being a Latinx student at an HSI is unique, as HSIs only make up 15% of all higher education institutions but enroll over 66% of Latinx college students



Figure 35. Students walking up Scholar's Lane

(Excelencia in Education, 2019). UC Merced is home for 57.4% of Latinx students however, UC Merced is unique as their only a few HSIs that are considered research institutions.

Latinx students come to understand their role on campus just like other students, who are not at an HSI through the institution's ritual cultures. Latinx students enter the UC Merced assemblage knowing has there

is a narrative of Latinx students not being academically prepared. Yet, Latinx students have demonstrated that they can be successful in the UC Merced assemblage through participating in the ritual cultures and programs the assemblage offers. While they engage with the institutions desire in *becoming* institutional agent, they are concurrently demanding the institution to do more for Latinx students and shaping their own *becoming*.

The Strategic Academic Vision plan, states that “UC Merced graduates will be exceptionally well prepared to navigate and succeed in a complex world” (UC Merced, 2009b, p. 11). This statement is related to the educational experiences that are designed by the institution; although, it also relates to the *becoming* of the Latinx student. Being able to navigate a complex world, is often associated with successfully increasing the social mobility of oneself. Although, Latinx students view academic success more than just a neoliberal economic investment but rather as building a community and learning to academically situate their experiences. One Latinx student described how they came to contextualize their experiences in the academy:

Everything we learned here in academia, is just the study of our everyday lives, as Latinx students. I feel like all of a sudden, I have this language to describe my experience, we didn’t know neoliberalism, but we did because we live it. We exist within it. We just learned new fancy words to describe it now (Interview, Nicole).

While the institution views success as navigating the complex world for economic gain, this line of flight does not necessarily align with the line of flight for how Latinx students achieve success. Latinx students have already been navigating a complex world

successfully and now they have the ability to contextualize their experiences. For Latinx students it was not just about establishing a neoliberal economic relationship with the institution. Yes, Latinx students engaged with the *becoming* of the institutional agent, by accessing academic resources through programs and research opportunities but their engagement was dictated by how they choose to engage. For example, some Latinx students engaged in opportunities to give back to the local community because “we have the same experiences and they need to know they can attend UC Merced just like me.” Latinx students *becoming* intrasects with the *becoming* institutional agent and create contradicting outcomes rather than just being one or the other, the Latinx student is entangled with both *becomings*.

The parallel outcomes of the UC Merced assemblage allow for Latinx students to gain the academic credentials that will make them marketable and prepared to engage in the neoliberal market. But it also contextualizes their own experiences and allows them to give back to communities. Through the academic plan, UC Merced has stated that the institution will help solve the pressing issues of the 21st century including, those in the STEM field, as UC Merced is a STEM campus. The focus on STEM degrees can be attributed to the neoliberal line of flight within higher education. As UC Merced attempts to distinguish itself from the other UC institutions they have focused on developing into a STEM campus. STEM research grant funding provides the institution with a national profile by securing grant funding. For example, UC Merced was just recently granted a Howard Hughes Medical Institute grant for developing an undergraduate biological science curriculum to be more inclusive of underrepresented and non-traditional students

(Alvarez, 2018). In the fall of 2018, a little over 54% of students had declared STEM majors (UC Merced, n.d.c.). For Latinx students majoring in the social sciences, humanities, and arts being at UC Merced shapes their academic knowledge differently. The degree and education that is obtained at UC Merced, will also bring them social mobility, however they use their academic knowledge gain to increase awareness and change issues on campus. As one student described:

I am a Sociology major and am minoring in psychology. I knew there was a lot of social issues that I wanted to do something about. This is my education; I'm educating myself on these systems. I got involved deeply to change UC Merced because I felt that while we have visual representation, we are not solving the root of the problem. You know, why Latinx students are having a hard time surviving at an HSI. (Interview, Marcos).

The materiality of the HSI designation is captured in this quote when the Latinx student is referring to the visual representation. The UC Merced assemblage has been able to materially represent the designation through the student body; however, students come to understand the designation not through visual representation but through the expression of the assemblage, the lack of resources available for Latinx students, and how the administration uses the designation. UC Merced administration often view the designation as point of pride, because, as previously mentioned, other UC institutions are already seeking to become an HSI. While their more established counterparts seek to gain the designation, UC Merced has exceeded the enrollment requirement and is often given applause for serving Latinx students. For administration, the HSI designation is an

accolade for the recognition of serving the Central Valley. The HSI designation for Latinx students has its own parallel outcomes; for Latinx students this was creating their own communities that express the designation. These two materiality's of the HSI designation shows the parallel outcomes between the way administration and Latinx students express the HSI line of flight. Previously, place was discussed as the embodied experience of interactions and movements in space and the UC Merced campus becomes the place where students are prepared academically; yet, the HSI designation is expressed materially differently for Latinx students and administration.

Latinx students' bodies provides the materiality of the campus (i.e. visibly present on campus); yet, these same students will tell you that the institution lacks in expressing the HSI designation within the UC Merced assemblage. For example, the campus visitor center does not provide materials regarding cost, admissions, or housing in Spanish. Marina, stated, "I think it is interesting that we have such a large population of Latinxs on campus yet there are no resources for them or their parents and these are prospective students and families" (Interview, Marina). The institution has received accolades for serving the Latinx population of the state and mirroring the state demographics, the HSI designation has yet to fully materialize on campus beyond the visual representation. In the section entitled *Assembling a Campus Landscape*, the creation of the Intercultural Hub and the social justice quad was discussed as ways in which the architectural assemblage of UC Merced was acknowledging the presence of Latinx and other students of color on campus. The materiality of the Intercultural Hub and social justice quad is an example of how the HSI designation is used to intrasect with the *becoming* of the Latinx

student. The UC Merced assemblage was forced to acknowledge the HSI designation materially in the ways that students have demanded by providing a cultural space on campus. While the UC Merced assemblage responded to the demands of Latinx students through their desired material expression. The UC Merced assemblage has also responded to the materiality of the HSI designation and the line of flight that expresses Latinx students as being ill-prepared by creating institutional rituals that create the *becoming* institutional agent. Again, the entanglement of the *becoming* institutional agent and Latinx student is concurrently happening one cannot exist without the other.

Intermission: Restrictions

The materiality of campus expansion has played a role in the ways in which Latinx students in particular have come to incorporate the construction as part of their being. Students have adapted their routines to incorporate the ever-changing landscape of



Figure 36. Top of the hill right before the start of the bridge has been blocked by construction barriers

campus. As campus construction has closed certain parts of campus (see Figure 24) and created alternative routes, students have molded the physical

layout to benefit themselves rather than follow the paths of how campus is being designed. Unlike the campus design plans that dictate how places on campus are supposed to be used, Latinx students on the UC Merced campus are shaping their

becoming on their own terms. While they might operationalize the *becoming* institutional agent by being on campus and engaging academically the way they interact with campus is a done on their own terms. This is one example of how Latinx students are *unbecoming* and *becoming*; the rejection of the institutional narrative and the *becoming* of the Latinx student develops through their everyday intractions on campus. Latinx students are the embodiment of the material and social construction of the campus.

Campus design plans and signs throughout campus inform the campus community how they are to walk from building to building, utilize rooms, and interact with others (see Figure 25). As construction on campus continues to develop, new temporary fixtures shape how campus community members maneuver throughout campus.

Construction fences and road barriers have become common on campus; however, they have also interrupted the way that students interact with the campus landscape. Through observations and interviews, students discussed the ways in which

campus construction has come to play a large role in how they move on campus and how they respond to administrative decisions. Design plans and construction areas dictate to the student how they arrive on campus; however, it is through various signs on campus and fences that students come to learn how they are required to interact with the new



Figure 37. Sign located on Ranchers Road

campus landscape. Yet despite these guides, many Latinx students have decided to make their own way. For a group of Latinx students this meant not paying attention to signs (see Figure 37) and walking on Ranchers Road to escape from the academic core.

Construction crews and equipment have displaced students' ability to use the campus as they have for many years. There is a grass field located between Lake Lot and Scholars Lane that serves as the practice field for the soccer teams - but its more than just a field of grass. This grass field has typically been a shortcut to cut across campus. Trails in the natural environment are typically made by humans that have created a path to reach a desired destination. Despite campus being a built and not being a natural environment, students have created their own campus trails to easily access Scholars Lane. A Latinx student stated that "before the construction started, we used to cut across the grass from the Lake Lot up the hill, when you do that you cut down 5 minutes but last semester that all changed" (Interview, Laura).

Where the construction equipment is stored also changes, as construction crews deliver certain sections of the 2020 project. Towards the end of Fall 2018, the trail that students had created from Bellevue Lot to Scholars Lane caught the attention of administration. Mostly because the trail in the grass field had caused damage to the practice field. Alejandra told the story of how some Latinx students took to creating their own paths:

We cut across this little path instead of having to walk all the way around to get to Scholar's Lane and up the hill. There's like this little grass path that people walk through and students completely destroyed the greenery. Administration put up

this little plastic orange fence, like a fence was going to stop us. Students tore it down and kept using the path. Then administration decided that a chain link fence would stop us. Well it did not stop us. I can't say who, but I know the person who cut a hole in the fence. That person just like the rest of us were tired of having to walk around so they brought wire cutters and cut a hole so students could walk through. It is more than just having to walk around but if this is our campus shouldn't we use it the way we want too. The hole in the fence allowed us to do the same thing we've always done. We would step through the hole in the fence. I remember all of my friends laughing, it's like a really small example of how we can just quickly create our own path to campus. And then the next day a campus safety officer was stationed at that fence and facilities had fixed the fence.

(Interview, Alejandra).

The fence is the materiality of the *becoming* of the Latinx student, in this case, the Latinx student who cut a hole into the fence changed the physical material in order to aid in the Latinx students *becoming*. This action created new potentials of *becoming* and *unbecoming*'s as it undid the fixedness of the fence in order for a different elaboration to become. This particular instance is an example of the co-evolution of the same symbiosis between the living and the non-living (Grosz, 2005). It is through the non-living fence that the external *becoming* occurs by the living. The Latinx student thus becomes the life that carries out the *becoming* of the fence and themselves. In order for the *becoming* to occur, the Latinx student was contingent on the materiality of the fence to force the encounter of what it opposes. The fence is the material representation of how the

institution wants Latinx bodies to operate on campus, the act of cutting the fence is the change in the trajectory of the *becoming*. A different line of flight is established by the cutting of the fence. No longer is the Latinx student following the trajectory of the walkway but is also rejecting the *becoming* institutional agent that the UC Merced is trying to impose and control by ensuring that the *becoming* is constantly open and in flux.

This act of cutting the hole is much more than an act of resistance by the Latinx student but rather a call to action for other students on the campus to embrace their own *becoming*. In the current campus configuration, the walk from the Lake Lot to Scholar's Lane up the hill to the academic core of campus can range from 20 to 25 minutes. With the cutting of the fence the walk was shortened to 12 minutes up the hill. This action was recognized by the administration and they had facilities quickly fix the fence. Latinx students who were interviewed stated that the following day campus safety officers were standing at the fence where the hole had been cut. Grosz (2005) argues that the real is constructed as fundamentally dynamic, complex, open-ended due to the *becoming*, that is



Figure 38. Scholars Lot with Campus in the background

to say that every element is in flux. Therefore, while the fence is material that is fix, this does not stop the *becoming* of the Latinx student. Deleuzian notions of *becoming* is the affirmation of difference

that is meant to have multiple and constant transformation (Baridotti, 1993), the *becoming* of the Latinx student is the flux of multiple *becomings* caused by various lines of flight. In this case, we can come to see how the *becoming* of the institutional agent and the *becoming* Latinx student is in flux with each other. This act by the Latinx students is an event that produces change, a state of being in-between. The UC Merced assemblage through its architectural design plans has continued to demonstrate to Latinx students how to engage academically and physically with campus yet, Latinx students are altering the *becoming* institutional agent to shape their Latinx student *becoming*. In this example, a group of Latinx students are shaping their *becoming* by walking on campus where there are no designated walkways.

What does the HSI designation do?

When the UC Merced assemblage intrasects with the HSI assemblage the outcome allows UC Merced to position itself as serving the San Joaquin Valley and their diverse student body of campus. The HSI designation in the UC Merced assemblage functions as a molar line it is, “something that is well-defined, massive, and governing” (Jackson, 2013, p. 122). Latinx students inhabit the molar territory of the UC Merced assemblage; their bodies give the institution the ability to claim the designation and it is often used as a point of pride, UC Merced is known for having the largest share of low-income, first-generation and underrepresented students (Busta, 2018). As a molar line, in the UC Merced assemblage the HSI designation is used to create the Latinx student experience by defining what it is and what it is not. The UC Merced assemblage has been able to stabilize the experiences of Latinx students through ritual cultures, campus

landscape, and cultivating the narrative of the Latinx student. All of these lines of flight create the *becoming* of the institutional agent. For the UC Merced assemblage to maintain stabilization, the assemblage needs Latinx students to act as institutional agents. This means that they need to engage with the institution in ways that will support the institutional goals.

The section *Assembling the Landscape* discusses how the campus design plans communicates to the Latinx student how to interact with the materiality of campus. In addition to these molar structures, the description of the student body shapes the *becoming* of the institutional agent. In the Fall of 2005, when UC Merced opened its doors, 47% of the student population were first-generation college students and Pell Grant recipients (UC Merced, 2013). This number has continued to rise. In 2012, it rose 6 percent (UC Merced, 2013), suggesting that the attractiveness of UC Merced to support this population of students. Most recently, in the Fall 2018, 75% of the incoming class identified as first-generation college students and 64% as Pell eligible (UC Merced, 2019). UC Merced has gained notoriety in newspapers and college rankings in the last few years (Mashinchi, 2018; Miller, 2018; Watanabe, 2018). In all of these news article and rankings, the description of the student body is included. For example, a recent article in the New York Times entitled *You've Heard of Berkeley. Is Merced the Future of the University of California*, the reporter describes who is attending UC Merced by suggesting that “the college does not attract the state’s top-scoring applicants when it comes to test scores and grade-point averages” (Medina, 2018, para. 6). This is an example of how Latinx students attending UC Merced are defined by contrasting them to

students who attend other UC institutions. The assemblage of the UC system is intrasecting with the UC Merced assemblage. Latinx students on this campus come to associate themselves with being ill prepared to navigate a UC institution. Latinx students who attend UC Merced are often reminded that they have “shortcomings in the ultra-competitive world of higher education admissions” (Busta, 2018, para. 8). It is this framing that brings in Latinx students into the UC Merced assemblage.

As the lines of flight within the UC Merced assemblage continue to intrasect, the assemblage emerges as a leader in serving the growing Latinx demographic of California. Chancellor Leland describe this as:

You see across the UC System a growing recognition that the demographic future of California cannot just be represented on one or two or three of its campuses. It has to be spread across all of the campuses, from the oldest to the youngest (Busta, 2018, para. 18).

The growing recognition of Latinx in California has increased awareness and desire to obtain the HSI status. As this inquiry has discussed, the HSI status materializes in different ways, whether that is how Latinx students are described as ill-prepared, increasing student services, or the creation of an Intercultural Hub, they all materialize and express the same components of the HSI differently. UC Merced administration has materialized the HSI designation as creating programs that support students’ academics. However, students do not see this materialization as something attributed to the HSI designation as these programs should already exist. Latinx students describe the

materialization of the designation was not captured by administration but rather materialized by Latinx students

I think through clubs and organizations you see the designation but not the institution itself. I think it has to do with us and our culture. We all worked hard to get here, and we support each other. We are each other's familia (Interview, Mariana).

For Latinx students attending UC Merced, it was about the financial support that was given by the institution rather than the desire to attend because it was an HSI. The need for a substantial financial aid package is part of UC Merced's goal of creating access to higher education for communities that are underserved in the Central Valley region. Once Latinx students arrive on campus they learn about the designation from administration. Students are introduced to the HSI designation by the administration most often in programming settings such as orientation or Bobcat Day. They come to see the materialization of the HSI differently than the UC Merced assemblage expresses.

The creation of the HSI designation in 1992 and the increasing amount of Latinx students seeking to obtain higher education in California as the largest ethnic group in the state, the HSI designation has become an important aspect for recruiting and supporting Latinx students. Newspapers and higher education industry publications often credit the institution as providing culturally supportive environments that allow Latinx students to succeed. For example, the Education Dive wrote the following regarding UC Merced:

UC Merced has paid more attention to the creation of programs and services that directly cater to Latinx students, including parent workshops conducted in

Spanish during freshman orientation and cultural celebrations and performances (Black, 2018, para. 2).

Observations during the last three academic years have shown that it is not the institution that is holding cultural celebrations and performances but rather student organizations. Outside of institutional programming such as orientation, Bobcat day, and Family weekend, Latinx cultural events are hosted and designed by Latinx student organizations. Holding Spanish language sessions is one way the UC Merced assemblage address the community that they serve; yet, as mentioned earlier, there are no brochures in the visitor's center that are in Spanish.

The lack of the UC Merced administration holding cultural events on campus created an opening for the *becoming* Latinx students to address this break in the assemblage. The cultural events on campus are held by the various Latinx student groups on campus and for many Latinx students it is through these events that the HSI designation is materialized. This is how one Latina discussed the designation:

Student organizations are the ones that are promoting the designation. They are doing the most events. I don't like the word Hispanic but just the browning of this institution I think UC Merced should be doing more, a lot more. Small things like brochures in Spanish could be one thing to make campus better (Interview, Crystal).

It is through these student-run and student-led cultural events that demonstrate institution's materiality of the designation. For the Latinx students that had been active in demanding a cultural center the designation was used a leverage in organizing for the

center. Mateo described how he was able to use the designation in order to form a new *becoming* on campus:

I've sat in meetings with administration and they have used the term (HSI) to talk about all the great things they are doing. Yet we've thrown it (HSI) back at them, and they are just kind of like damn. We figured if the designation motivates you to do something then we are going to use it to our advantage. The administration can use it to brag about us (Latinx students) but we are going to demand a cultural center. (Interview, Mateo).

This quote from Mateo demonstrates the altering of the UC Merced assemblage HSI discourse in order to gain something materially, in this case a cultural center. The intrasecting lines of the HSI designation with the *becoming* Latinx student pushed the assemblage to respond.

In these two examples, the HSI designation as an assemblage has multiple productions. The materiality of the designation is produced by the Latinx bodies; yet, it is also produced during cultural events on campus and through the organizing for a cultural center. As events occur on campus, they act as emergent systems that come together to produce the materiality of the HSI designation through Spanish music, performances, and language. When the celebrations manifest themselves on campus, they produce new *becomings* for the HSI designation, Latinx students, and the UC Merced assemblage.

Intermission: Producing New Lines of Flight

Prior to construction on the 2020 project, the amphitheater had been the location where various student groups had held their events. In the November of 2016, the student group Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Atzlan (MEChA) held their annual Dia de Los



Figure 39. Amphitheater in 2016

Muertos event in the amphitheater. This time, instead of the amphitheater having a view of the fields that surround the campus, the amphitheater was surrounded by a black fence that

separated the students from the construction that would be the first delivery phase of the 2020 project.

There are two ways to get to the amphitheater once you are on campus. If you are at the library, you will walk down the hill towards the resident's halls and fitness center. If you are down the hill in the residence halls, then you just cross the street, walk about 200 yards, and you are there. As I walked out of the Kolligian Library and stood at the threshold, I began to hear music at a distance. In architecture, a threshold purpose is to connect things together in order to create a passageway. Once I get closer to the bridge, I can make out the music. It is the popular Mexican singer Vicente Fernandez and the song that's playing is *Por Tu Maldito Amor*. The music that is being played is a staple in many Latinx households during parties or on the Saturday when it is time to clean the

house. I notice that a group of students walking in front of me begin singing out loud and I smile and laugh a little as I was singing the song in my head. As I cross the bridge, the space feels different. This time, walking down the hill the familiarity of space has changed just by the sounds of the music. The speakers and the cell phone playing music are the materiality that is introduced to the UC Merced assemblage by students to the campus space.

Right before you start to enter the amphitheater, attendees are greeted with a sign that says ‘Día de los Muertos is not your Halloween!’ When I had spoken to Latinx students who were in charge of the event, they stated “we are tired of seeing people link Día de los Muertos with Halloween, we want people to educate themselves, come to the event learn more and appreciate our culture but don’t appropriate it” (Interview, Sandra). This is one way in which MEChA members



Figure 40. Día de los Muertos is not your Halloween sign that was located at the entrance

are establishing a line of flight within the assemblage to express their *becoming* Latinx student. The HSI designation in the UC Merced assemblage was materialized through the music, flyers, and alters. The materiality of the *becoming* Latinx student along with the HSI designation sought to transform campus by creating a learning experience not in a classroom but rather through the event.

Once you arrived at the amphitheater, there were Latinx students that greeted you and explained how you could obtain pan de muerto and hot chocolate. In order to partake in the food, one must visit every altar and have a representative sign your card. Once you were done you could visit the refreshment table to get your pan and hot chocolate. Each altar was designed by a student of color organization such as the Black Student Association, Chicano/Latinx Health Club, and Lambda Alliance, and had representatives that shared who they were honoring. It was through the altars that



Figure 41. Lambda Alliance Altar

students participating in the event came to learn more about the purpose of Dia de Los Muertos on Latinx student terms.

While cultural events on campus are often viewed as an exchange between students, this event went beyond providing a cultural exchange but rather introduce and entangled lines of flight within an assemblage.

This event, like many other cultural events on campus, function as a threshold in the UC Merced and HSI assemblage. A threshold does not gain meaning until it is connected to other spaces. The Latinx student organizers of this event created a threshold when they brought to campus their Latinx culture into the fishbowl. A situated relationship was created between Latinx student organizers and the UC Merced and HSI assemblages. In this threshold, the Latinx student organizers and UC Merced as an

organizational structure enter in relationship by the intrasection with one another and then exiting to create something else. As one of the main Latinx center events on UC Merced campus, Día de Los Muertos is a student-run event and student-led. One of the student organizers indicated that UC Merced does not provide a Latinx based cultural initiatives:

We do Día de Los Muertos, but we don't do any big events where it's the Office of Student Life throws the event or the school itself, it is clubs that have to take the initiative but all these Latinx clubs don't have the funding and support. It's small groups of students trying to do large scale events and it doesn't always work out (Interview, Monica).

In this threshold, lines of flight opened up to address the lack of institutional Latinx centered events on campus. For the Latinx student organizers, creation of the Día de Los Muertos annual event is immanent to their *becoming*. Each time the event is held is a new line of flight seeks to tell the institution something. It is through this line of flight that a point of entry has been made and through its exiting something else is created. This creation can be the call for an institutional-wide Latinx event, increase funding and support to Latinx student groups, or something else. The new possibilities are endless but what they do convey is action and productivity; they transform the Latinx student *becoming* through the immanent dynamics.

Entangled Becomings

The UC Merced assemblage has produced multiple *becomings* for the institution and for Latinx students. As a place, UC Merced provides the materiality and physical boundary of higher education, the HSI designation, and Latinx students. When the lines

of flight are intrasecting they make possible the illumination of political, economic, and historical motivations for the creation of UC Merced. The space of UC Merced in the previous pages demonstrated the how relational lines are the entanglement of the social and material exchanges of the *becoming* for the institutional agent and Latinx students. The *becoming* does not end with the section; rather, it is constantly happening. Perceiving space and this document as static and closed ignores the fact that UC Merced as an assemblage continues to intrasect with these lines of flight and new lines of flight that have yet to enter the assemblage.

Part Five: Possibilities

Relational lines of buildings, greenery, parking lots, people, and education, when aligned create a conditional line of the campus landscape and operate as sites of education. It is through the interaction of the inhabitants that turn a space into a place building. Higher education institutions landscapes are often viewed in terms of greenery and as neutral sites where education takes place. Thinking of campus landscapes as assemblages illuminates how the materiality of campus landscapes has shaped our *becoming*. Campus landscapes are assemblages that express who and what belongs. This inquiry used post-qualitative methods to excavate the UC Merced campus landscape to demonstrate what it produces for Latinx students in higher education. UC Merced has been described as the future of the UC system but also as the future of higher education given its increasing representation of Latinx students. The site for this inquiry was chosen due to the various lines of flight that have been discussed in this inquiry. UC Merced belong to a prestigious research system and as an HSI has the ability to demonstrate that the designation is more than enrollment or graduation rates but rather the materiality of campus creates and shapes the *becoming* of Latinx students.

The UC Merced assemblage is inclusive of other assemblages that are constantly evolving and influencing the *becoming*. In the UC Merced assemblage, campus design plans frame the institution as a living laboratory and a microcosm of the world. Through the campus landscape design, the UC Merced assemblage has been able to configure the

materiality of campus to produce the outcome of the institutional agent while simultaneously producing the *becoming* of the Latinx students. It is through the design plans that the discursive values of the institution are expressed through the placement of buildings, walkways, and gathering spaces. As was discussed in *Constructing the Landscape*, the campus has been designed to maximize the usage of space through the use of mixed-use buildings however, what is occurring is the separation between the students who major in STEM and the Social Sciences. The materiality of the campus is in constant relations with the *becomings* of the institutional agent and Latinx student. The buildings, pathways, and greenery shape the experiences of the inhabitants but also act upon them as well. In the intermission restrictions, the fence is the materiality of the assemblage and is in relationship with the inhabitants. What was produce was the new *becomings* for Latinx students. Latinx students were negotiating the *becoming* institutional agent and *becoming* Latinx student, by how they move about campus everyday encompasses their ability to be a “successful” institutional agent, yet the materiality of campus also pushed them against the institutional agent into their own *becoming* Latinx student. In turn the assemblage attempts to territorialize itself by responding to the intrasecting lines that the *becoming* Latinx student is creating.

Another assemblage that was discussed is the HSI designation, this assemblage is constantly evolving and intersecting with the nested set of assemblages that make the UC Merced assemblage whole. When the designation first started the types of institutions that received the designation were not research institutions. However, as previously mentioned six of the nine UC institutions have gained the designation as the Latinx

population in California continues to grow. At the same time that the most selective UC institution, UC Berkeley has announced plans to obtain the designation by 2028. When the HSI designation intrasects with the UC assemblage what gets produced changes with each line of flight (e.g. other UC institutions). For the UC Merced assemblage and its entanglement with the UC assemblage of prestige and research, the assemblage has territorialized itself in order to stay entangled. While the UC Merced assemblage is entangled it is also moving away from the sameness of the UC assemblage to create something new. The UC Merced assemblage has created institutional goals to gain the level of prestige as other UC institutions. To do this, we've seen how orientation sessions are held in Spanish to ensure the success of its majority Latinx student population. Although this line of flight is only materialized for a moment in time (e.g. the one day of event) it has an incorporated itself throughout the assemblage. Yet this incorporation is limited as the assemblage does not create promotional materials in Spanish. The HSI designation in the UC Merced assemblage is undergoing its own *becoming* as

This inquiry brought the attention of new features and endless possibilities of the *becoming* of the UC Merced assemblage, the Latinx student, and the institutional agent. As previously mentioned, this inquiry does not end with the ending of this document rather the *becoming* will continue. The UC Merced assemblage will once again change with the completion of the 2020 project in the fall the same year. UC Merced is also undergoing conversation regarding a new project entitled "35 for 35", where the goal is to reach 35,000 student capacity by 2035. This projected enrollment growth should not be thought of as a linear process. Instead if we continue to think with assemblage theory this

growth will create new lines of flight while speeding up and slowing down current lines of flight in the UC Merced assemblage. The campus landscape will change, new lines of flight will be introduced to the assemblage and the UC Merced assemblage will continue to oscillate attempting to incorporate the new lines of flight to gain stability but one thing is for certain the UC Merced assemblage will never be stable and will constantly produce new *becomings* with parallel outcomes.

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Appendix A: Methodology

Dominant educational research functions within the context of quick and easy relay from theory to practice and is highly valued when using large-scale data that informs interventions and contributes to dominant ways of thinking and modes of inquiry (Taylor, 2016). St. Pierre (2000), refers to dominant education research practices as "conventional humanist qualitative methodology," which provides a process in which research should occur. The research path is set with well-identified categories for the researcher that are clear and accessible (St. Pierre, 2017). Conventional humanist qualitative research is systematic in order to guarantee validity therefore, it is important not to do things out of order (St. Pierre, 2017). St. Pierre (2011), and others have pushed to destabilize the work of "conventional humanist qualitative inquiry" through the usage of post-qualitative research that emphasizes not the research design but "thinking with theory" (St. Pierre, 2015). Post-qualitative research seeks to rethink the empirical by critique the neoliberal research audits culture that seeks to regulate what counts as research (Taylor, 2017). This is done by shifting focus from methodology to onto-epistemology (St. Pierre, 2015). Post-qualitative research is the depiction of "knowing-in the being" that occurs during the research process itself (Taylor, 2016). Post-qualitative research is not guided by strict research methods instead the researcher is guided by theories to invent inquiry while in the doing (St. Pierre, 2015). St. Pierre (2015), suggests that post-qualitative inquiry must not be processes oriented but rather messy. Conducting a post-qualitative inquiry means shifting the focus from methodology to onto-epistemology. Onto-epistemology is knowing in the being, knowing and being

are not isolated from each other rather they are mutually implicated. This requires reading theories in order to dismantle conventional approaches to inquiry in order to begin with theories and concepts. Using new materialism and assemblage theory, this dissertation sought to philosophically shift the way HSIs are conceptualized to break away from predestined outcomes to examine the entanglement of HSIs through campus landscapes.

This study seeks to conduct research using a new materialist paradigm that views the research process as a research-assemblage (Fox & Alldred, 2014). To recap, an assemblage consists of content, expression, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization (Masny, 2015). Seeing research and data as a ‘research assemblage’ acknowledges the territorialization that shapes the knowledge production by the flows of methodology and methods (Fox & Alldred, 2013). The relations within the research assemblage include research tools such as schedules, audio recording technologies, research literatures and findings, interviews, researchers, and contextual elements such as physical spaces, cultures, and traditions. Using a materialist ontology, the appendix will focus on explaining the methods that were used to collect data which demonstrated how campus landscapes in conjunction with the HSI designation come to materialize themselves and produce new *becomings*. It is important to note that this inquiry was guided by theories and concepts rather than research design and methodology.

Research Method and Design

The orientation of this study focused on what things do, rather what they are, and how the process flows rather than one that is stable. Focusing on matters of power and resistance and the interaction that draw small and large relations into an assemblage (Fox

& Alldred, 2015). A new materialist ontology does not see data as inert and indifferent. Rather, it acknowledges that data has their ways of making themselves logical to us (MacLure, 2013). While ethnographic methods served as a research tool to contextualize events and their assemblages, the overall study departs from attending to the classical subjects but rather focusing on the flows within the assemblages of campus landscape. This inquiry drew from new materialist ontology that shifts the unit of analysis from the human agent to the assemblage, no longer focusing on what bodies and social institutions are doing, but rather focusing on the capacities for action, interaction, feelings, and desire of groups of bodies affected by flows of the assemblage. Therefore, tools of interpretive research such as the interviews collected that tend to reflect human actions and experiences shifted to efforts to disclose the relations within assemblages and the flows that occurs between relations (Fox & Ward, 2008).

Research Questions

This post-qualitative ethnographic investigation focused on how one four-year HSI campus landscape is generating social relations and practices. The following questions are guiding this dissertation study:

1. What do campus landscapes produce at a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI)?
 - How do institutional structures produce normativity?
2. How do campus community members intra-act with materiality of the campus landscape in ways that produce new *becomings*?
 - What are the social and spatial boundaries that are being inscribed and erased by the campus landscape?

3. How do campus landscapes produce HSI?

Site Selection and Recruitment

This post-qualitative inquiry took place at the University of California, Merced (UC Merced), a four-year institution of higher education that is in the Central Valley of California. In 2010, UC Merced received the federal designation of Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). UC Merced is part of the University of California higher education research system and is the newest institution within the system. This site is part of an ongoing research project that is interrogating ritual cultures at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (Gildersleeve, 2017; Gildersleeve & Sifuentez, 2017). It is through this project that this dissertation was conceptualized.

Recruitment. The ongoing research project that I have been a co-investigator for the last 18 months (Gildersleeve, 2017; Gildersleeve & Sifuentez, 2017) has allowed me to meet students, faculty, and administrators on campus. It is through these established relationships that I was able to identify participants and observation locations that were included in the study. Through my connections with participants I used snowball sampling to recruit other participants for interviews. Informal conversations with campus visitors, students, faculty, and staff occurred during observations.

Data Collection Tools

This post-qualitative case study used ethnographic data collection tools to explore the assemblages of UC Merced. A series of methods for data collection included observations, movement maps, in-depth semi-structured interviews, campus artifacts and archives, and secondary data which lend themselves to answering the research questions.

In the following sections students, faculty, staff, and administrators will be referred to as campus community members.

Observations and Fieldnotes

To answer the guiding research questions, observations focused on the campus community members' usage of space and their intra-action with materiality of campus. Campus landscapes normalize the daily interactions between the materiality of campus and the campus community. Therefore, participant observations allowed for a deeper understanding of routines, intentions, and everyday practices with campus landscapes. During observations, I created fieldnotes that captured and preserved the insights and understandings of experiences (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). The fieldnotes aided in capturing insights to the social relations and any degree of conflict and cooperation amongst campus community members.

According to Emerson et al., (2011), field notes aid the researcher in understanding what is being observed and allows the research to participate in new ways and to observe with a new lens. In addition to observing campus common spaces, observations occurred in “non-places or spaces” that are typically not thought of as active places because they are not distinctive in everyday movements (Ulmer, 2016). On this campus, non-places or spaces were the hallways of buildings, the line for the coffee shop, parking lots, or the bus stop waiting area.

For the last eight months I spent approximately three to four days on campus for six to eight hours conducting observations and interviews. The observations and field notes were used to identify assembled relations and the capacities produced in bodies that

together make an assemblage work (Fox & Allred, 2015). In addition to identifying the assembled relations, observations provided detailed geographical and physical environment of campus that contribute to the assemblages deterritorialization and reterritorialization.

Movement maps

In addition to ethnographic observations field notes, movement maps were created during high traffic periods on campus. Mapping is one of the most underused activities that allows the researcher to get to know the sociogeographic area where the observation is occurring (Schensul and LeCompte, 2013). The creation of movements maps allowed me to interact with the campus landscape and discuss with individuals what areas of campus are important and what activities connects them with campus spaces. A total of 88 movement maps were created. The creation of movement maps served to record the movement and trajectories of the campus community in these spaces. The movement maps allowed me to conceptualize the campus landscape as the architectural assemblage, that was discussed in *Constructing the Landscape*.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews

I conducted interviews with participants during field visits over the last eight months. In-depth interviews allowed for an exploration of a variety of topics to be discussed (Schensul & LeCompte, 2013). Using this approach to interviews allowed me to explore topics in-depth and cover new topics as they arise (Schensul & LeCompte, 2013). The intent of these interviews was to gain exposure to new information and

expand on understanding of campus landscape. The following is a breakdown of the interviews that we conducted

	Latinx Interviews	General Interviews
Students	50	30
Staff	45	35
Faculty	25	15
Administration		20
Informal Conversations	60	40

Campus artifacts and documents

The study of place cannot be limited to the study of special moments but must also include a global aspect that encompasses the histories of the institution (Lefebvre, 1991). To conduct this study, it was important to understand the purpose of the campus, it's location, and plans for expansion. Archival research was be conducted to understand the purpose of UC Merced within the city, the region, state, and UC Merced. The documents collected allow for the creation of a timeline that informed how history has played a part in the current development of the UC Merced as an institution. The following is a breakdown of the archival documents that were used:

Legislative testimony	5
Budget Reports	10
Enrollment Plans	1
California Master Plan	1
Institutional Reports	12
Campus Strategic Plans	4
Newspapers	40
Programs and Flyers	100
Pictures	1,000

Secondary data

As previously mentioned, this campus is part of an ongoing research project on ritual cultures at an HSI and data collected from this study will serve as secondary data (Gildersleeve, 2017; Gildersleeve & Sifuentez, 2017). The secondary data included over 30 ethnographic observations of campus institutional rituals such as graduation, orientation, and homecoming and student led ritual events, interviews with students, faculty, and administration (20), as well as artifacts created from these events. Data collection for this project has occurred over the last 18 months. This secondary data helped provide insights on how campus rituals are socially constructing and producing space and spatial relations (see Gildersleeve, 2017, Gildersleeve & Sifuentez, 2017,).

Data Analysis

Education research typically relies on representation and interpretation of large-scale data that seeks to contribute to evidence-based research (Masny, 2016). However, this study approached data analysis not as representation and interpretation of the ethnographic data collected but rather views data as an assemblage to allow the study to decenter subjects and focus on the *becoming* (Masny, 2016). This new materialist analysis incorporated both non-human and human relations and explore the territorializing and deterritorializing capacities that are produced in relation to assemblages. This study sought not to interpret data but rather demonstrate what is constantly *becoming*.

As discussed before, an assemblage is not just a thing but rather a process of making and unmaking a thing, therefore, analyzing data should be thought of as a process

in which different assemblages are plugging into each other. Using Deleuze and Guattari (1987) “plugging in,” Jackson and Mazzei (2013) engage plugging in as a process rather than a concept. They argue that “plugging in to produce something new is a constant, continuous process of making and unmaking” (Jackson and Mazzei, 2013, pg. 262). The plugging in is the act of reading the data with theory, characterized as the “reading-the-data-while-thinking-the theory” (Jackson and Mazzei, 2013). In this process, the relationship among the data and theories intra-act and create something new (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013). However, plugging in requires more than just knowing the theories and the data. Jackson and Mazzei (2013), argue for at least three maneuvers: (a) using philosophical concepts to disrupt the theory/practice binary by decentering each and showing how they constitute or make one another, (b) being deliberate and evident of the analytical questions made possible by a specific theoretical concept and ways that these questions emerged in the middle of plugging in, and (c) working with the same data to see the new knowledge each time it is plugged in. I used these three maneuvers to push data and theory to produce knowledge differently, by focusing on the generative aspects and refusing to create fixed meaning regarding the UC Merced campus landscape and Latinx students but rather engage in the threshold of transformation.

This study focused on the process of plugging in during the data analysis development to produce new knowledge with the various forms of data collected. Plugging in helps extend the process of thought rather than being trapped by the reduction of data by coding. The following sections will explain the ways that data analysis will depart from an orthodox ethnographic analysis.

Observation fieldnotes

Each observation that was conducted has field notes that reflect the time spent in the field. The field notes were read multiple times to see what campus landscapes do and the relational assemblages that are occurring. The field notes helped to decipher the ways the campus community create a territory through their spatial interactions and ways that this territory is re/deterritorialized. Aligning the data collection method with a new materialist framework, the point is not to reduce data to themes and topics but rather focus on the assemblages that are constantly intraacting with each other.

Using the concept of the rhizome, which is characterized as providing connectivity, multiplicity, mapping and asignifying rupture (Masny, 2016) field notes were reviewed not for themes but rather be explored to understand the rhizomes of the UC Merced assemblage. Rhizome do not have a starting point and is not grounded like a tree with roots in one location. Every element in the rhizome is equally important, when one element enters a relation with another element it creates connections of lines among the element (Masny, 2015). Rhizome are made up of molar lines, molecular lines, and lines of flight. Molar lines are fixed lines on a campus. When a rapture occurs in a molar line, it produces new lines of flight. Fieldnotes from observations captured moments of rapture of the various rhizomes on campus. The rhizome had multiple entryways that create new ways of problematizing and questioning conventional ways of observing and interviewing (Masny, 2015).

Movement maps

Each movement map was analyzed to determine patterns of usages by the campus community. Movement maps helped support the analysis of field notes by representing how community members move about through campus at different times of the day. Jackson (2016) discusses milieus made up of activities, spaces, and ongoing movement that creates territories. Milieus are everywhere, they are made up of qualities, substances, powers, and events. Milieus are not containers but rather they are fluid and provisional which allows them to be temporarily attached to other milieus (Jackson, 2016).

The analysis of movement maps were informed by field notes to examine what milieus of campus are being created by human and nonhumans. Field notes during observation informed how various assemblages were intraacting with each other through the rhizome. One of the three maneuvers mentioned by Jackson and Mazzei (2016) is working with the same data to see the new knowledge that is becoming through different plug ins. Using fieldnotes in collaboration with movement maps enabled me to see new knowledge that was produced. Plugging in as an activity helped explained and elaborated the assemblages (Jackson, 2013) captured through fieldnotes and movement maps.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews

Interviews provided evidence of how campus community members are situated within assemblages (Juelskajer, 2013). Assemblage theory and new materialism acknowledges that interview data is partial, incomplete, and is always in the process of retelling and remembering, therefore, interview data was not grounded in traditional coding and thematic analysis. All interviews that took place were transcribed by the

researcher and viewed as part of the *becoming* of the participant and campus assemblages. Transcriptions were not just the text of the interview, nor did the transcribing occur in isolated action; rather, transcribing was an event in which the *becoming* research occurred.

Participants that were interviewed entered the interview space with their own “made meaning” of their experiences on campus meaning that they chose what to emphasize and what not to reveal. Therefore, transcriptions of interviews served as part of the participants *becoming*, that has “no origin, no destination, no end point or goal” (Jackson, 2013 p. 115). Transcriptions were used to make sense of how different points of activities encouraged lines of flight and interactions among immanent dynamics. Methodologically thinking with assemblage theory and new materialism, I was able to notice the *becoming* as double move of any participant, noticing their movements and lines of flight in the data (Jackson, 2013).

Campus artifacts and documents

The history of campus and campus expansion plans were used to inform how the social production of space was determined on this campus. This data provided the context of the campus. Archival research such as government documents, local newspaper articles, and institutional documents were used to situate the knowledge that is produced by the campus. Documents and artifacts are components to understanding the historical placement of the college campus and its materiality. The information gathered allowed for the acknowledgement of the historical lines of flight that created the UC Merced assemblage. This data was used in *What is Our Story?* and throughout the other sections

as historical lines of flight are still active within the UC Merced assemblage. In conjunction with secondary data, archival research situated how different assemblages on campus are intraacting with each other and how their historical patterns have come to influence their current functions.

Secondary data

The secondary data that is available from the previous ritual cultures research project was used to inform movement maps, interviews, and observational field notes. The data collected from this inquiry examined how space is utilized on campus through ritual events by exploring the materiality that produced by these events (Gildersleeve, 2017; Gildersleeve & Sifuentez, 2017). This data aided in supporting the findings that identified trends on how space is socially constructed and produced through campus rituals. As previously mentioned, secondary data includes interviews, observations, artifacts from Latino centric events and institutional events.

Summary

The research tools that were used in this inquiry overlapped and supported each other throughout the collection and analysis of this study. In theorizing campus landscapes as assemblages, I was able to find how the entanglements of space, HSI designation, campus community members, historical and present life are continuously producing new *becomings*. By making connections rather than oppositions the use of thinking with theory, allowed for the creation of knowledge to address different problems based on the events and encounters occurring on in the UC Merced assemblage. These

concepts are not isolated from one another nor are they independent rather, they are intermixing during the process of *becoming*.

Appendix B

Assembling a Hispanic-Serving Institution A Campus Landscape Analysis

Data

Archival Materials

Documents:

Legislative Testimony
Budget Reports
Enrollment Plan
California Master Plan
Institutional Reports on Campus Building

Latinx Interviews

Latinx Students: 50
Latinx Staff: 45
Latinx Faculty: 25

Site Visits

Time Span: 3 Academic Years
Days per visit: 3 to 4 days

General Interviews

Students: 30
Staff: 35
Faculty: 15
Administration: 20

Observations

Institutional Rituals: 50
Student Led Rituals: 28

Artifacts

Newspaper articles: 40
Programs & Flyers: 100
Pictures: 1,000

Quote from Data

We cut across this little path instead of having to walk all the way around to get to Scholar's Lane. There's like this little grass path that like people walk through and students completely destroyed the greenery. Administration put up this little plastic orange fence, like a fence was going to stop us. Students tore it down and kept using the path. Then administration decided that a chain link fence would stop us. Well it did not stop us. I can't say who but I know the person who cut a hole in the fence. The person just like the rest of us were tired of having to walk around so they brought wire cutters and cut a hole so students could walk through. It is more than just having to walk around but if this is our campus shouldn't we use it the way we want too. The hole in the fence allowed us to do the same thing we've always done. We would step through the hole in the fence. I remember all of my friends laughing, it's like a really small example of how we can just quickly create our own path to campus. And then the next day a campus safety officer was stationed at that fence and facilities had fixed the fence.

