

ANSWERS to todays puzzles

9	2	1	4	6	7	5	8	3
5	7	6	8	2	3	4	1	9
4	8	3	1	5	9	2	6	7
2	9	4	3	8	6	1	7	5
8	6	5	7	1	4	9	3	2
1	3	7	5	9	2	8	4	6
7	5	2	6	4	1	3	9	8
6	1	8	9	3	5	7	2	4
3	4	9	2	7	8	6	5	1

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Equity lecture to examine future of Texas education

Hispanic population could be majority by the year 2020

By Sam King

▶ Within five years, the Hispanic population may be the majority in Texas. With this in mind, students at Texas A&M are sponsoring a lecture to examine and evaluate the education of Hispanic youth.

The Project for Equity, Representation and Governance and the Council for Minority Student Affairs are co-hosting Angela Valenzuela, a professor in the Educational Policy and Planning Program at the University of Texas at Austin. The Thursday discussion will focus on educational accountability, specifically among Latino youth and low-income families.

Roxann Lerma, biochemistry senior and public relations representative for CMSA, said the lecture covers a topic that is increasingly impacting Texas.

"Latinos are the biggest minority in Texas A&M and this is a very important topic due to Latinos will be the majority in Texas in 2020, which is five years from now," Lerma said. "Also, the university just introduced a Latino and Mexican American Studies minor and so this just makes this impact that Latinos are making a great impact in Texas."

Kenneth Meier, distinguished political science professor and director of PERG, said a lack of education affects people throughout their lives.

"If you don't get access to quality education, you have trouble getting good jobs, you tend to have trouble getting adequate housing, you tend to live in a neighborhood with more crime, you tend to feel less happy about your life, your children don't prosper as well," Meier said. "Education is sort of the cornerstone upon which human happiness gets built in contemporary society."

While educational testing is a national subject, Valenzuela said Texas is examining its high-stakes assessments, which include STAR and TAKS tests. In recent years, high-stakes testing has become a topic of discussion within legislature, a discussion that Valenzuela said Texas is in the middle of.

"Texas is ground zero for high-stakes testing," Valenzuela said. "We have already been able to make some changes as a state that already hold promise for states elsewhere. For example, in 2009, we eliminated high-stakes consequences tests for third graders due in great part to the work of the Texas Center for Education Policy."

Valenzuela said that while these actions positively impacted 300,000 third-graders, the legislation dealing with assessments did not go far enough.

"In light of the current backlash, it is important to develop responsible, research-based solutions that require a significant rethinking of public education curriculum and instruction in ways that honor and respect children's languages, communities and identities in ways that can serve as the basis for a culturally responsive, world-class educational opportunity for all of Texas' children," Valenzuela said.

Lerma said this lecture is applicable in one form or another to every person in Texas, and that faculty, staff and students alike should make an effort to attend.

"This is not a Latino-based lecture," Lerma said. "It's a lecture that I think is mostly based on Texas. Her research is based mainly on Texas, so I think if you're Texan you should come to the lecture."

Meier said the lecture's scope is wide, making it relevant to a wider crowd.

"I think it's very important that everybody hears this," Meier said. "At Texas A&M, we are a rapidly transitioning university and we live in a very, very diverse state that's getting more and more diverse. This means that paying attention to what the K-12 education system is in Texas, I think is vitally important for maintaining the type of quality institution we are."

The lecture titled, "Reinventing Assessment in Texas: Next Generation Accountability and Assessment," will be from 5:30-6:40 p.m. Thursday in Rudder 302. The event is free and open to the public.

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EBOLA PANEL

Members of former Gov. Rick Perry's Texas Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness gave a panel on the Ebola virus Wednesday night. For the story, visit thebatt.com

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