

# ABEL RODRÍGUEZ

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## EDUCATION

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### University of Pennsylvania Law School, Juris Doctor, 2011

Certificate: Non-Profit Leadership and Cross-Sector Innovation  
Honors: Toll Public Interest Scholar (merit scholarship)  
Exemplary Pro Bono Service Award  
Philadelphia Bar Association Law Student Pro Bono Honoree  
Activities: Journal of Law and Social Change, *Senior Editor*  
Immigrant Rights Project, *Co-Director*  
Latin American Law Students Association, *Board Member*  
Penn Law for Haiti, *Committee Member*

### Harvard University, Master of Theological Studies, 2004

Focus: World Religions  
Activities: *A History of Latinos at Harvard*  
*The Skeptic* (satirical newspaper)

### Stanford University, Master of Arts in Latin American Studies, 2002

Thesis: *Trials of Visibility: Literature, Film, and Sexuality in the Cuban Special Period*  
Activities: Research Assistant to Fernando Birri (New Latin American Cinema)  
New Latin American Cinema Working Group, *Co-Coordinator*

### Cabrini University, Bachelor of Arts in Spanish (Minor: Mathematics), 2001

Honors: Class Valedictorian; *Summa cum laude*  
Romance Language Departmental Award  
Activities: Research Assistant to Cynthia Halpern (Latin American Literature)  
Curriculum Committee; Student Academic Board; Student Ambassador

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

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**St. John's University School of Law, Queens, NY** 2023-present

*Assistant Professor of Law*

- Teach Criminal Law, Immigration Law, and Crimmigration.
- Serve as member of academic committees and advisor to student groups.

**University of Pennsylvania Law School, Philadelphia, PA** 2019-2023

*Lecturer in Law*

- Teach Crimmigration seminar on race and the intersection of criminal law and immigration law.
- Act as faculty supervisor for students completing Penn Law's senior writing requirement.

**Villanova University School of Law, Villanova, PA** 2021-2023

*Visiting Assistant Professor of Law*

*Director, Clinic for Asylum, Refugee, and Emigrant Services*

- Teach seminar on client-centered lawyering skills and practice of immigration law.
- Supervise student representation in defensive and affirmative immigration applications.
- Coordinate annual symposium and supervise full-time legal fellow and half-time paralegal.

**Cabrini University, Radnor, PA** (on leave 2021-2023) 2015-2023

*Inaugural Director, Center on Immigration* 2017-2023

*Associate Professor of Religion, Law, and Social Justice (tenured)* 2021-2023

*Assistant Professor of Religion, Law, and Social Justice* 2015-2021

- Lead academic center promoting immigrant rights through education, advocacy, and scholarship.
- Secure funding for center, with IA, through an endowment gift, grants, and donations.
- Offer courses focused on immigration law and policy, race and ethics, and religion and law.

**Temple University School of Law, Philadelphia, PA** 2013-2014

*Adjunct Professor, Immigration Legal Clinic*

- Taught seminar on client-centered lawyering skills and practice of immigration law.
- Supervised law school students in live client representation in immigration proceedings.

**La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA** Fall 2014

*Adjunct Professor, Political Science*

- Taught Principles of American Government course to Latinx students.
- Mentored immigrant and first-generation students pursuing law school.

**University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA**

*Lecturer in Foreign Language* 2004-2008

*Course Chair, Intensive Introductory Spanish* 2006-2008

- Taught introductory, intermediate, and advanced Spanish language and culture courses.
- Developed curriculum and coordinated up to 9 sections of introductory Spanish courses.
- Trained, supervised, evaluated, and mentored teams of 6-8 instructors.

## **PRACTICE EXPERIENCE**

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**Defender Association of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA** 2012-2015

*Immigration Specialist*

- Advised public defenders and clients as to the immigration consequences of criminal proceedings.
- Conducted information sessions for incarcerated noncitizens regarding immigration matters.

**Nationalities Service Center, Philadelphia, PA** 2012-2015

*Staff Attorney*

- Represented primarily formerly convicted clients in immigration court and before USCIS.
- Conducted consultations at NSC and the Mexican Consulate of Philadelphia.

- Esperanza Immigration Legal Services, Philadelphia, PA** 2011-2012  
*Langer, Grogan, and Diver Fellow in Social Justice*
- Represented older adults and immigrants with disabilities in immigration matters.
  - Conducted citizenship trainings for advocates working with noncitizens.
- Penn Law Criminal Defense Clinic, Philadelphia, PA** Spring 2011  
*Student Representative*
- Represented clients in Philadelphia Municipal Court under attorney supervision.
  - Conducted client intake interviews at the Defender Association of Philadelphia.
- Penn Law Transnational Legal Clinic, Philadelphia, PA** Fall 2009 & Spring 2010  
*Student Representative*
- Represented clients in dependency/Special Immigrant Juvenile Status case under supervision.
  - Disseminated report at the Buduburam Refugee Settlement in Ghana.
- Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Miami, FL** Summer 2010  
*Student Intern*
- Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Zacatecas, MX** Summer 2009  
*Student Intern*

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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### **Articles**

*Lethal Immigration Enforcement*, Cornell L. Rev. (forthcoming Dec. 2023)

*Legislating Morality: Moral Theory and Turpitudinous Crimes in Immigration Jurisprudence*, 53 Loy. L.A. L. Rev. 39 (2019) (co-author with Jennifer Bulcock)

### **Book**

THE ROAD TO SANCTUARY: BUILDING POWER AND COMMUNITY IN PHILADELPHIA (Lexington Books/Fortress Academic 2022) (co-editor with Amada Armenta and Caitlin Barry)

### **Book Chapters**

*The Intersection of Criminal and Immigration Law*, in SOCIAL WORK WITH IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES: LEGAL ISSUES, CLINICAL SKILLS, AND ADVOCACY (Fernando Chang-Muy and Elaine P. Congress eds., 3d ed., Springer Publishing Company 2023) (forthcoming Fall 2023)

*Examining the Past: A History of Sanctuary Movements and Practices*, in THE ROAD TO SANCTUARY: BUILDING POWER AND COMMUNITY IN PHILADELPHIA (Amada Armenta, Caitlin Barry, Abel Rodríguez eds., Lexington Books/Fortress Academic 2022)

*Philadelphia's Road to Sanctuary*, in THE ROAD TO SANCTUARY: BUILDING POWER AND COMMUNITY IN PHILADELPHIA (Amada Armenta, Caitlin Barry, Abel Rodríguez eds., Lexington Books/Fortress Academic 2022)

*Crimes and Immigration: Civil Advocacy for Noncitizens at the Intersection of Criminal and Immigration Law*, in SOCIAL WORK WITH IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES: LEGAL ISSUES, CLINICAL SKILLS, AND ADVOCACY (Fernando Chang-Muy and Elaine P. Congress eds., 2d ed., Springer Publishing Company 2016)

### **Other Publications**

*Embracing Mother Cabrini's Vision: Pursuing Immigrant Justice in the Classroom and Beyond*, CABRINI MAGAZINE, Fall 2016 (included in curriculum to accompany LAS MADRES DE BERKS documentary advocating for an end to family detention)

### **Works in Progress**

*The Necropolitics of Immigration Enforcement*

*The Case for Central American Reparations*

*Decriminalizing Sanctuary*

### **ADVOCACY FILMS**

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BOXED OUT: CRIMINAL RECORDS AND THE BAN THE BOX MOVEMENT IN PHILADELPHIA (Penn Program on Documentaries and the Law 2011) (co-director and co-editor with Katherine Andrews and Megan Rok)

THE SOLUTIONS: BUDUBURAM REFUGEE SETTLEMENT AND GHANA'S FORGOTTEN GUESTS (University of Pennsylvania Law School 2011) (director and editor)

### **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS & TRAININGS**

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#### **Academic Conferences**

Participant, "Lethal Immigration Enforcement," Emerging Immigration Scholars Conference, George Washington University Law School (June 15-16, 2023)

Participant, "Racialized Migrant Death," Clinical Law Review's Annual Workshop, New York University Law School (October 8, 2022)

Co-presenter, "Vile Exclusion: Abolishing the Codification of Morality in Immigration Law," Law and Society Annual Meeting, Virtual Conference (May 28-31, 2020)

Presenter, “Decriminalizing Sanctuary: Free Exercise and the Convergence of Interests in the New Sanctuary Movement,” Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, CA (November 13-16, 2019)

Presenter, “Devising Depravity: Examining Categorical Imperatives and Approaches to Morality in Immigration Jurisprudence,” Migration Law and Policy Section, The Migration Conference, University of Bari, Italy (June 18-20, 2019)

Co-presenter, “Legislating Morality: Normative Ethics and the Shortcomings of the Crime Involving Moral Turpitude in the Immigration Legal Context,” Migration Law and Policy Section, The Migration Conference, University of Lisbon, Portugal (June 27-29, 2018)

Panelist, “The Legal and Religious Dimensions of Sanctuary,” Immigration in Philadelphia Panel, Eastern Sociological Society Conference, Philadelphia, PA (February 23-25, 2017)

### **Invited Talks**

Guest Lecturer, “Challenges for Noncitizens in the Crimmigration System,” School of Social Policy and Practice, Immigration Policy and Practice Graduate Course, University of Pennsylvania (March 16, 2022)

Guest Lecturer, “Seeking Asylum Post-Trump: Changes and Remaining Challenges,” Perspectives on Migration Course, Villanova University (October 20, 2021)

Guest Lecturer, “The Sanctuary Movement in Historical Context,” Sanctuary Cities: Practice and Policies Course, Urban Strategy Program, Drexel University (April 12, 2021)

Speaker, “Justice at the Margins: Migrant Rights, Realities, and Resilience in the US Borderlands,” Steinbrucker Series on Global Mobility and the Social Life of Law, Arcadia University (November 5, 2019)

Guest Lecturer, “Historicizing Sanctuary,” Sanctuary Cities Graduate Course, Urban Strategy Program, Drexel University (April 15, 2019)

Panelist, “The Boundaries of Deservingness,” Latinx Ivy League Conference, University of Pennsylvania (April 6, 2019)

Panelist, “Navigating Sanctuary: Cities’ Responses to Shifting Immigration Policies,” Penn’s Perry World House and the City of Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania (November 14, 2018)

Speaker, “The Roots and Resilience of Philadelphia’s Sanctuary Movement,” Center for Peace and Justice Education, Villanova University (November 7, 2018)

Panelist, “How Could this Happen? Unpacking the Legal Framework Enabling Family Separation,” Penn Law Immigrant Rights Project, University of Pennsylvania Law School (October 3, 2018)

Panelist, “Crimmigration and Immigration Enforcement,” LALSA Conference, University of Pennsylvania Law School (February 2, 2018)

Speaker, “An Immigrant’s Experience: Mental Health Access and Human Trafficking,” National Association of Social Workers - Pennsylvania Chapter, West Chester University (November 17, 2017)

Panelist, “DACA and Dreamers: Twenty-First Century Immigration Policy in America,” Latinos and Education Conference, Delaware County Community College (October 31, 2017)

Panelist, “Immigration Law and Constitutional Principles,” Annual Continuing Legal Education Conference, City of Philadelphia Law Department, (July 27, 2017)

Panelist, “Dreamers in College: (Im)Migration and Successful Institutional Policies,” Latinos and Education Conference, Delaware County Community College (April 7, 2017)

Presenter, “From Criminal Conviction to Civil Nightmare: Padilla’s Promise in Pennsylvania,” Philadelphia Bar Association (March 30, 2017)

Panelist, “Abriendo Puertas: Strengthening Latino Communities Through Mentoring, Leadership and Increasing College Access,” Latinos and Education Conference, Delaware County Community College, (April 15, 2016)

Guest Lecturer, “Crimes and Deportation: Pitfalls and Strategies within the Criminal and Immigration Legal Systems,” Immigration Law Class, University of Pennsylvania Law School (November 3, 2014)

Panelist, “Effective Immigration Practice for Solo and Small Firms,” Bench-Bar and Annual Conference, Philadelphia Bar Association, Atlantic City, NJ (October 18, 2014)

Panelist, “Immigration Consequences of Criminal Proceedings,” Philadelphia Municipal Court Judicial Conference, Philadelphia, PA (May 9, 2014)

Speaker, “Legal Challenges Facing Our Immigrant Communities,” TESOL Language and Linguistics Speaker Series, College of Education, Temple University (April 24, 2014)

Speaker, “Encountering Immigration Issues Unexpectedly,” Criminal Defense Continuing Legal Education Training, Defender Association of Philadelphia (April 5, 2014)

Panelist, “A Dialogue about Immigration, Identity, and Policy,” Penn for Immigrant Rights, University of Pennsylvania (February 26, 2014)

Keynote, “Answering the Call to Service,” Delta Epsilon Sigma Honor Society Induction Ceremony, Cabrini College, Radnor, PA (February 25, 2014)

Panelist, “The Immigration Consequences of Criminal Activity,” Drexel University Law School, Philadelphia, PA (January 27, 2014)

Panelist, “Immigration Law and Practice Today,” Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law (November 21, 2013)

Guest Lecturer, “Criminal Records and the Ban the Box Movement in Philadelphia,” Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania (November 7, 2013)

Panelist, “Hot Topics in Immigrant Rights and Immigration Law,” Philadelphia Bar Association, Philadelphia, PA (June 6, 2013)

Panelist, “Collateral Consequences of Criminal Convictions and Sentencing in Pennsylvania Courts,” Pennsylvania Bar Association, Philadelphia, PA (April 23, 2013)

Keynote, “Social Justice in Any Language,” Phi Sigma Iota Honor Society Induction Ceremony, Cabrini College, Radnor, PA (March 8, 2013)

Speaker, “Immigration Law and Policy: Grasping the Landscape at Institutions of Higher Education,” Staff Institute Training, Cabrini College, Radnor, PA (June 26, 2012)

Guest Speaker, “Justice for the Formerly Convicted and Ban the Box as Social Movement,” Rutgers School of Law, Camden, NJ (February 15, 2012)

Panelist, “Criminal Records and the Ban the Box Movement in Philadelphia,” University of Pennsylvania Law School (January 18, 2012)

### **Media Appearances & Service Talks**

Panelist, “Leadership Mindset: Overcoming Obstacles,” University of Pennsylvania Law School, Philadelphia, PA (January 31, 2022)

Trainer, Crimes and Immigration Training, Pro Bono Research Project - Statewide Resource for Immigration Consequences of Criminal Convictions, Mariposa Legal, Indianapolis, IN (April 16, 2021)

Speaker, “Global Challenges in Migration and a Cabrinian Response,” Dreaming of a Single Human Family Speaker Series, Cabrini National Shrine (February 24, 2021)

Speaker, “Welcoming the Stranger: Seeking Migrant Justice in the Borderlands,” Greenwich Reform Synagogue, Greenwich, CT (October 7, 2019)

Featured Expert, Segment on Immigration Raids, Telemundo Television Station, Philadelphia, PA (September 8, 2019)

Speaker, “Access to Justice and the Weaponization of Immigration Law,” Amnesty International - Philadelphia Chapter, Philadelphia, PA (October 25, 2018)

Guest, “Deportation, Detention, and Family Separation,” Encuentros Políticos/Political Encounters Radio Program, USALA Radio, Philadelphia, PA (July 4, 2018)

Keynote Speaker, “Leveraging Language for Change,” Phi Sigma Iota Honor Society Induction, Cabrini University (May 3, 2018)

Panelist, “How to Thrive as a Public Interest Lawyer,” Public Interest Week, University of Pennsylvania Law School (February 23, 2018)

Speaker, “The Search for Truth in the Immigration Continuum” Catholic Immigrant Refugee Coalition Convening, Radnor, PA (September 22, 2017)

Panelist, “Advancing the Common Good: Social Issues in the 2016 Election,” Faithful Citizens Series: Voting With Your Conscience, Cabrini University, Radnor, PA (October 12, 2016)

Panelist, “Diversity in Public Interest,” Temple University Beasley School of Law, Philadelphia, PA (September 8, 2014)

Panelist, “Know Your Criminal and Immigration Rights,” Trans-Health Conference, Philadelphia, PA (June 14, 2014)

Panelist, Penn Law Outreach Career Panel, Black Law Students Association, University of Pennsylvania Law School (February 8, 2014)

#### **OTHER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICE**

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<b>University of Pennsylvania Law School</b> , Philadelphia, PA <i>Interviewer, Toll Public Interest Scholarship</i>	2015-present
<b>ACLAMO Family Centers</b> , Norristown, PA <i>Member, Board of Directors</i>	2013-2020
<b>AL DÍA News</b> , Philadelphia, PA <i>Steering Committee Member, I Am an American Immigrant Campaign</i>	2018-2019
<b>Esperanza Immigration Legal Services</b> , Philadelphia, PA <i>Member, Board of Directors</i>	2013-2015
<b>St. John the Evangelist Church</b> , Philadelphia, PA <i>Member, Social Justice Committee</i>	2007-2008
<b>Annunciation House</b> , El Paso, TX; Juárez, México <i>Interim House Coordinator, Border Awareness Experience Leader, Volunteer</i>	Summers 2003-2007



## **COURSES TAUGHT**

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### **St. John's University – School of Law**

CRIM 1040: Criminal Law  
INDR 1030: Immigration Law  
INDR X: Crimmigration

### **University of Pennsylvania – Carey Law School**

LAW 906: Crimmigration

### **Villanova University – Charles Widger School of Law**

LAW 5906: Clinic for Asylum, Refugee, and Emigrant Services (CARES)  
LAW 8911: Advanced Clinic for Asylum, Refugee, and Emigrant Services (CARES)

### **Temple University – Beasley School of Law**

LAW 750: Immigration Legal Clinic

### **Cabrini University – School of Humanities and Social Sciences**

HECG 300: Honors Immigration, Law, and Social Justice  
ECG 300: Immigration, Law, and Social Justice  
REL 223: Church and State: A U.S. Perspective  
REL 109: Morality Matters  
COL 101: College Success

### **La Salle University – School of Arts and Sciences**

POL 151: Principles of American Government

### **University of Pennsylvania – School of Arts and Sciences**

SPA 202: Advanced Spanish Conversation  
SPA 140: Intermediate Spanish II  
SPA 130: Intermediate Spanish I  
SPA 121: Intensive Introductory Spanish  
SPA 120: Introductory Spanish II

## **ACADEMIC COMMITTEE WORK**

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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Council, Cabrini University (2020-2021)

Undergraduate Assessment and Curriculum Committee, Cabrini University (2020-2021)

Undergraduate Curriculum Subcommittee, Cabrini University (2016-2020)

Student Grievance Board, Cabrini University (2015-2021)

## **GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

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Campus Compact of New York and Pennsylvania, “Serving Noncitizen Students” Two-Day Virtual Faculty Development (2020)

Catholic Relief Services Global Solidarity Grant, “Social Justice in Action: Legislative Advocacy for Immigrant Rights in Washington, DC” (2019)

Mexican Consulate of Philadelphia Grant, Financial Literacy Training for Immigrant Communities in Montgomery and Delaware Counties (2018)

Cabrini University Faculty Development Summer Research Grant, “The Art of Social Justice” in Mexico City (2016)

Clinical Fellowship in Clinic for Applied Legal Studies (Political Asylum Clinic), Georgetown University Law School (2015) (declined)

Langer, Grogan, and Diver Social Justice Fellowship – Legal Representation for Older Adults and People with Disabilities in their Immigration Matters (2011-2012)

## **SELECTED EVENTS ORGANIZED**

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Symposium, “Taking Sanctuary: Building Power and Community in Philadelphia,” Villanova University School of Law (Spring 2023)

Symposium, “The Road to Abolition: Intersectional Approaches to Immigrant Justice,” Villanova University School of Law (Spring 2022)

Faculty Development, “Serving Noncitizen Students,” (Day 1: Serving Undocumented Students, Day 2: Serving International Students), Cabrini University (Spring 2021)

Center on Immigration Book Talk Series (hosted authors on issues of immigration, crimmigration, and racial justice), Cabrini University (2020-2021)

Delaware Valley Migration Scholars Colloquium Series (hosted scholars from the region each semester to discuss works in progress), Cabrini University (2019-2021)

Advocacy Days for Philadelphia Area Universities (coordinated advocacy days each semester for immigration reform in Washington, DC, and Harrisburg, PA), Cabrini University (2017-2021)

Know Your Rights Workshops (trainings for campus communities to protect rights in encounters with police and ICE), Cabrini University (2017-2021)

Symposium, “Decolonizing the Borderlands: Root Causes, Resilience, and Resistance,” Cabrini University (Fall 2019)

Symposium, “Trauma and Trafficking,” Co-sponsored by Center on Immigration and Center for Domestic Violence and Trauma Education, Cabrini University (Fall 2018)

Edward V. Sparer Symposium, “Now More Than Ever: Expanding Access to Justice in Times of Crisis,” University of Pennsylvania Law School (Fall 2010)

### **PROFESSIONAL AWARDS & RECOGNITION**

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Peter J. Gomes, STB ’68 Distinguished Alumni Award, Harvard University (2020)

Luminary Award, Cabrini University (2019)

Distinguished Faculty Award for External Service, Cabrini University (2019)

Superhero Award, United Way of Greater Philadelphia and S. New Jersey (2018)

Alumni Hall of Fame, Montgomery County Community College (2018)

Distinguished Achievement Award, Cabrini University Alumni Association (2017)

Honorary Member, Delta Epsilon Sigma (2017)

Penn Course Review’s Highest Rated Professors, University of Pennsylvania (2004-2008)

Nomination, Dean’s Award for Distinguished Teaching, University of Pennsylvania (2006)

### **BAR ADMISSION & AFFILIATIONS**

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Pennsylvania Bar (active)

Member, American Immigration Lawyers Association

Member, Hispanic Bar Association

### **LANGUAGES**

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Spanish (native)

Portuguese (intermediate)