(a) Background: This pilot study is framed in the context of recommendations set forth by the Surgeon General's report "Culture, Race, and Ethnicity: A Supplement to Mental Health and a report from the National Council of La Raza "Critical Disparities in Latino Mental Health: Transforming Research into Action." These reports point to the need for mental health research that explores the cultural variation and heterogeneity of the Latino population. There is a need for further research to explore the nuances of cultural differences in perceptions of depression.

(b) Method: Guided by the cognitive anthropological theory of culture, we use ethnographic interview techniques to explore cultural models of depression among foreign-born Mexican (n=30), Cuban (n=30), Columbian (n=30) and island-born Puerto Ricans (n=30) who represent largest Latino groups in Florida. Study methodology consist of participant observation and face to face interviews that include the use of structured (e.g., free lists) and semi-structured questions. We explore the level of agreement or disagreement between the different ethnic groups using cultural consensus analysis to determine if there are differences between subgroups.

(c) Results: We are currently completing data collection. However, preliminary findings reveal the relevance of social context and influence of cultural beliefs on Latino immigrant perceptions of depression causation, symptomology, treatments and help-seeking behavior. It is expected that the information gained from the ethnographic interviews will provide insights about the cultural domains of depression. Findings inform our understanding about Latino subgroup similarities and differences in their conceptualization of depression and mental health care that can inform the development culturally relevant interventions.

(d) Conclusions: A better understanding about the cultural construction of depression may allow practitioners to better serve Latino immigrant communities. The application of the concept of cultural models and the methods of cultural consensus analysis to depression represents presents an innovative approach to expanding our understanding of cross-cultural similarities and differences.